



Northern
Ireland
Office

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2023-24

Northern Ireland Office

Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24

(For the year ended 31 March 2024)

Accounts presented to the House of Commons pursuant to Section 6(4)
of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000

Annual Report presented to the House of Commons
By Command of His Majesty

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 18 December 2024

This is part of a series of departmental publications which, along with the Main Estimates 2024-25 and the document Public Expenditure: Statistical Analyses 2023, present the government's outturn for 2023-24 and planned expenditure for 2024-25.



© Crown copyright 2024

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

Governance Team
Northern Ireland Office
Erskine House
20-32 Chichester Street
Belfast
BT1 4GF

Email: Richard.Steven@nio.gov.uk

ISBN: 978-1-5286-5007-6

E03126305 12/24

Printed on paper containing 40% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office.

Contents	Page
Permanent Secretary's perspective on performance	4
Performance Report	6
Performance Overview	7
Financial Summary	12
Performance Analysis	17
Corporate Performance	22
Sustainability Report	29
Accountability Report	32
Corporate Governance Report	33
o Director's Report	33
o Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities	38
o Governance Statement	41
Remuneration and Staff Report	50
o Remuneration Report	50
o Staff Report	62
Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report	68
o Statement of Outturn Against Parliamentary Supply	68
o Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons	77
Financial Statements	83
Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	84
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position	85
Consolidated statement of Cash Flows	86
Consolidated Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity	87
Notes to the Departmental Accounts	89
Annexes	123
Annex I: Regulatory Reporting 2023-24	124
Annex II: ALB reporting 2023-24	128

Permanent Secretary's Perspective on Performance



Dr Julie Harrison

Northern Ireland Office Permanent Secretary

I would like to thank my predecessor, Madeleine Alessandri, and Dominic Wilson for their leadership of the Northern Ireland Office prior to my appointment as Principal Accounting Officer on 16 October 2023. Reflecting on 2023-24, and as I write the foreword to my first annual report as Permanent Secretary at the Northern Ireland Office, I am struck by the expertise, commitment and resilience of Northern Ireland Office staff during what was a particularly challenging 12 months in 2023-24.

During that time we saw our efforts to support engagement with all parties and to develop a joint approach across Whitehall rewarded with the restoration of the Northern Ireland Executive, underpinned by a significant financial package which includes measures designed to help the Northern Ireland Executive to put public finances on a more sustainable footing.

We made significant progress against our objectives in 2023-24, despite managing emerging priorities arising from the 'governance gap' in Northern Ireland and other ongoing issues including the ongoing legacy of violence and its impacts on people and communities. Key amongst these achievements was the establishment of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR). We also successfully delivered a Global Investment Summit in Belfast, working closely with colleagues from the Department for Business and Trade and supported the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to maintain its 'A' status and continue its vital work to safeguard rights for all people in Northern Ireland.

This year also marked the 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and the department hosted and supported a number of events that engaged Northern Ireland businesses, politicians and academics as well as the public, community and voluntary sectors which allowed people from all sorts of perspectives and lived experiences to reflect on how much Northern Ireland has changed since 1998 and to look forward together, to a more secure and prosperous future.

Given the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive for most of 2023 we were focused in 2023-24 on managing the governance situation in the absence of local Ministers alongside sustained effort to restore devolution. At the start of the year, the Northern Ireland (Interim

Arrangements) Act 2023 enabled decision-making and the continued delivery of essential public services. This Act also gave the Secretary of State the power to commission advice or request information from Northern Ireland departments, in order to develop options for raising more public revenue or improving the sustainability of public finances in Northern Ireland. The financial analysis and other preparatory work undertaken by the Department in this time meant that a restored Executive was left in a position to move swiftly to get Northern Ireland finances onto a better path for the long term by utilising the £3.3bn package agreed in February. Coupled with the launch of the £1bn PEACE PLUS programme, working across Whitehall with key stakeholders in Northern Ireland, the department secured an unprecedented level of funding to help sustain peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland and in the case of the financial package it also secured important commitments by the returning Executive to support the transformation of public services for the long term. As part of the restoration package, the development of the 'Strengthening the Union' Command Paper was another significant achievement that provides a roadmap for delivering the opportunities provided by the Windsor Framework.

I would like to thank everyone in the department for the thoughtful and diligent application of expertise by the NIO that helped to deliver important objectives during 2023-24 and look forward to working with you to sustain our impact in 2024-25.

Dr Julie Harrison

Performance Report

Performance Overview

Our Purpose

Our key purpose is to make politics work by working alongside the Northern Ireland Executive to help improve the effectiveness and delivery of the devolved institutions to ensure a more secure Northern Ireland, deliver a growing economy and a stronger society.

Working across its offices in Belfast and London, the Northern Ireland Office's portfolio is complex, extensive, and impactful. The department is passionate about delivering for the people of Northern Ireland, and all teams operate in a flexible, empowering, and inclusive way.

Vision and Mission

The department's vision is to make Northern Ireland a better place to live, work and invest.

To achieve this vision, the department supports the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in promoting the best interests of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom. It ensures that Northern Ireland interests are fully and effectively represented at Westminster, and that the Government's responsibilities are fully and effectively represented in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Office Structure

As at 31 March 2024, the Northern Ireland Office employed 170 staff across its offices in Belfast and London.

The departmental Board, and the Executive Committee, oversees and manages the work of the department. Each of these have responsibilities for making sure that the department carries out its work as efficiently as possible and meets legal and other obligations. Further information on the work of the Board and the department's Committee structures can be found in the Governance Report.

The department's organisation is centred on the delivery of key objectives and priorities. The department's senior leadership structure as at 31 March 2024 is shown below:

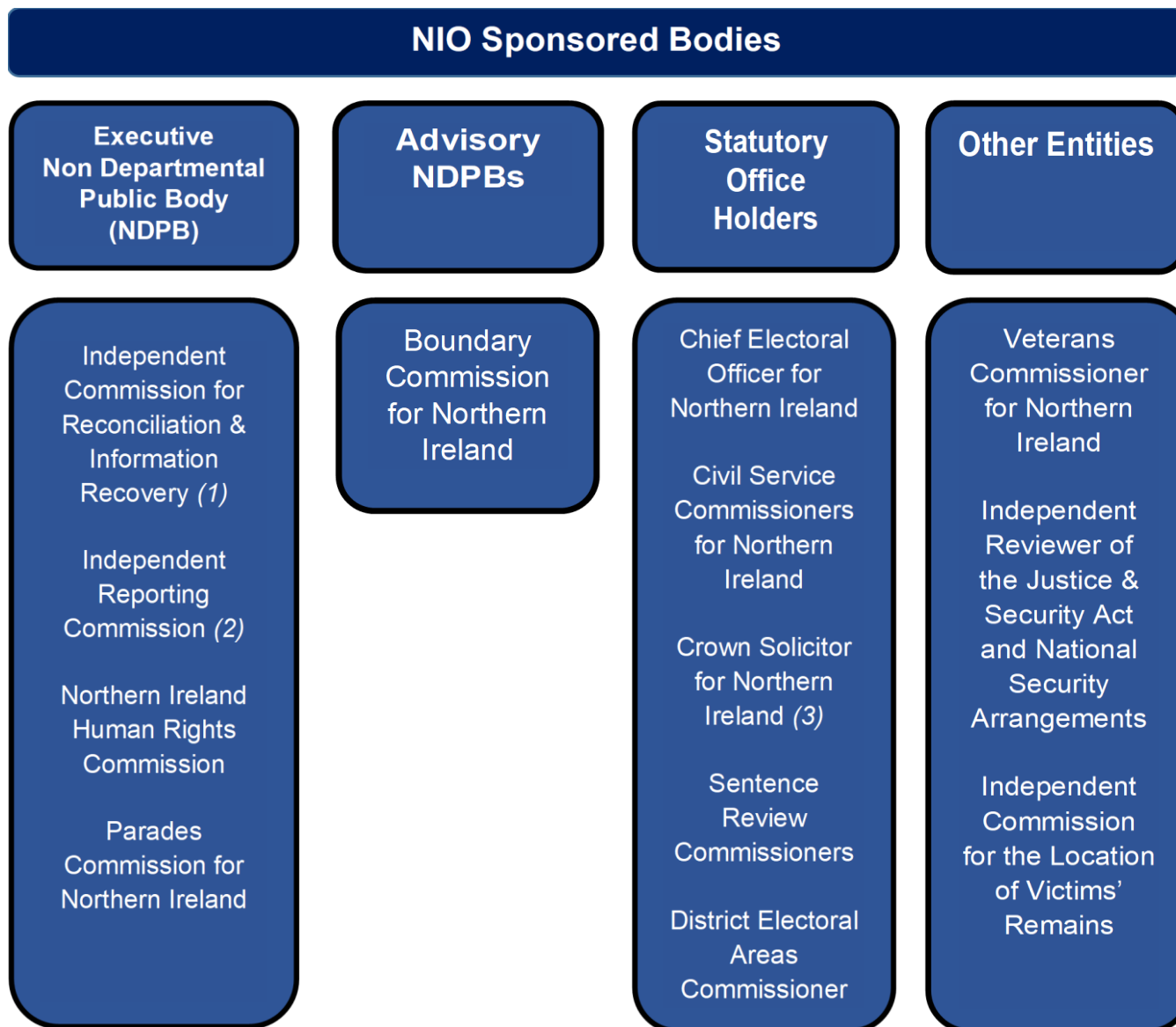


Sponsored Bodies

In addition to the core department, there are a range of matters dealt with through a network of associated bodies, such as the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland, and the Independent Reporting Commission (among others).

These bodies and other entities differ considerably from each other in terms of their formal status, intended purpose, statutory or other responsibilities, the degree of independence from government, and size. An overview of the department’s sponsored bodies is shown below and further information about the department’s governance structures is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/northern-ireland-office/about/our-governance>



Notes:

(1) *The Independent Commission for Reconciliation & Information Recovery was legally established as an NDPB on 1 December 2023.*

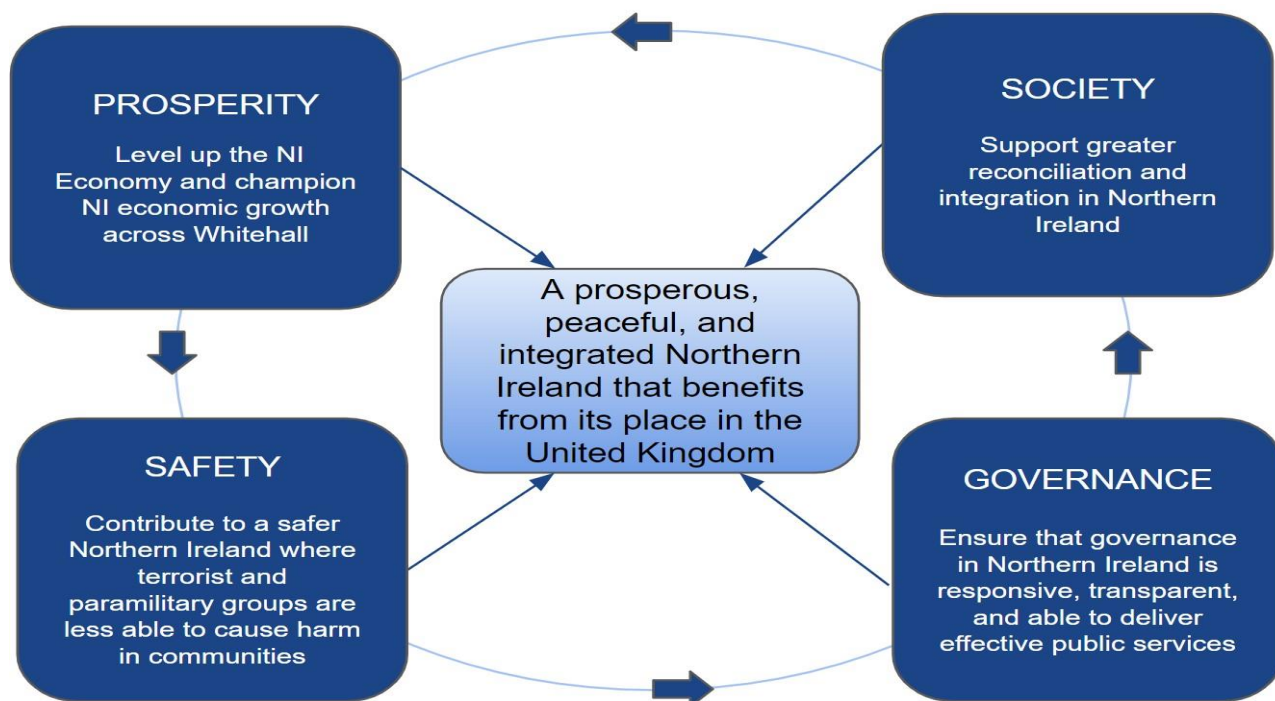
(2) *The Independent Reporting Commission is an International Treaty Body but for accounting purposes it is treated as an Executive NDPB.*

(3) *The Crown Solicitor is appointed by the Advocate General under Section 35 of the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973 but funded via the NIO which acts as an Exchequer Department.*

In addition to the bodies and entities sponsored by the NIO, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland also makes appointments to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, which is an executive NDPB sponsored by The Executive Office, which is a department of the Northern Ireland Executive.

Priority Outcomes

The NIO’s Outcome Delivery Plan sets out the four strategic outcomes that support the NIO’s vision. They are focussed on **Prosperity, Society, Safety and Governance**. Our whole department effort is focused on delivering these priority outcomes, maximising the use of the resources available.



Performance Overview

From the outset of 2023/24, Northern Ireland was faced with a significant governance challenge, which had been building since the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive following the resignation of Northern Ireland’s First Minister on 3 February 2022.

In response, the department maintained focus on the primary aim of restoring the Executive while also seeking to address the growing governance gap in the interim period and progress the other outcomes across its portfolio which, together, help to build a prosperous, peaceful, and integrated Northern Ireland.

Notably, in the first few months of the year, the Northern Ireland (Interim Arrangements) Act 2023 was passed which extended existing decision-making powers in the absence of Northern Ireland Ministers and gave the Secretary of State the power to commission advice or request information from Northern Ireland departments, in order to develop options for raising more public revenue or improving the sustainability of public finances in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland (Ministerial Appointment Functions) Regulations 2023, which came into effect on 11 July 2023 and further regulations made on 2 October 2023, addressed the need for urgent critical appointments to be made by the Secretary of State to a number of Northern Ireland public bodies, including approving the appointment of a new Chief

Constable by the Northern Ireland Policing Board, and a range of other public appointments that would normally have had appointments made by Northern Ireland Ministers. This legislation ensured that functions could continue to be delivered across a range of public services.

Indeed, during the reporting period, the department took steps to manage the governance gap and associated risk and also achieved many key deliverables across its priorities. These deliverables ranged from securing funding for economic development, addressing the legacy of the past (including facilitating the establishment of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery) and working with our delivery partners to address the threat from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism with the threat level reduced from SEVERE to SUBSTANTIAL in March 2024.

Alongside this work, the department supported the Secretary of State in leading a series of political engagements which culminated in the successful restoration of the devolved institutions. Looking ahead, key challenges remain such as ensuring sustainability of public finances, enhancing public service delivery, progressing economic growth and building a more integrated society but crucially, the restoration of devolution provides a key foundation on which to make further progress.

Key moments leading to restoration of the Northern Ireland Executive:

- Spring/Summer 2023: The Secretary of State continued to engage with all the Northern Ireland parties to facilitate the restoration of the Northern Ireland Executive
- December 2023: The Secretary of State held roundtable talks with the Northern Ireland parties on public finances and publishes details of a financial package worth more than £3.3 billion
- January 2024: The Secretary of State met with the Northern Ireland political parties at Hillsborough Castle; new legislation was introduced to extend the Executive Formation period and ensure the Executive could form; UKG published the “Safeguarding the Union” Command Paper
- February 2024: On 3 February 2024, the Northern Ireland Assembly met and elected a new Speaker. Michelle O'Neill was nominated as First Minister and Emma Little-Pengelly was appointed deputy. The Prime Minister (Rishi Sunak) visited the first sitting of the new Assembly on 5 February 2024.

Progress against each of the four priority outcomes is set out in the Performance Analysis section below. Further information on work undertaken throughout the year, such as announcements and other publications is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/search/news-and-communications?organisations\[\]=northern-ireland-office&parent=northern-ireland-office](https://www.gov.uk/search/news-and-communications?organisations[]=northern-ireland-office&parent=northern-ireland-office)

Financial Summary

Spending summary highlights for 2023-24

Spend By Budget Classification	2023-24 £m	2022-23 £m	Variance £m
Resource DEL (Voted) (Departmental operations including depreciation)	38.2	39.6	(1.4)
Resource DEL (Non-Voted) (Election Funding)	-	-	-
AME (Non-Cash accounting provisions)	(3.3)	0.4	(3.7)
Capital DEL (Expenditure on Departmental non-current assets)	2.6	0.4	2.2
Non Budget (NI Executive funding)	20,899	19,755	1,144
Prior Period Adjustment (Note 23) – Resource DEL	14.5	-	14.5
Prior Period Adjustment (Note 23) – Capital DEL	0.4	-	0.4

Funding

The department's activities are financed by Supply voted by Parliament. Each year the NIO is given Parliamentary approval for its expenditure when Parliament votes the Main Supply Estimates. Subject to Parliament's agreement, the estimates may be amended during the year at the Supplementary Estimate stage. The estimates are published by Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO) and contain details of voted monies for all Government departments. The 2023-24 Supplementary Estimates are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplementary-estimates-2023-24>

Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

The NIO DEL (budget) for 2023-24 was £53,223k including non-voted expenditure of £45k and covers expenditure arising from:

- overseeing the effective operation of the devolution settlement in Northern Ireland and representing the interests of Northern Ireland within the UK Government;
- expenditure on administrative services;
- expenditure arising from the Stormont House Agreement and the Fresh Start Agreement;
- Head of State related costs and VIP visits to Northern Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and other Reviews and Commissions arising from the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Northern Ireland Act 2000, the Northern Ireland Act 2009, political development and inquiries;
- work of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland;
- the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland, elections and boundary reviews;
- Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland;
- legal services, security, victims of the Troubles including the work of the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims Remains and arms decommissioning;
- compensation schemes under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 and Terrorism Act 2000;
- the running of Hillsborough Castle and certain other grants; and
- the Independent Reporting Commission.
- the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

The department's DEL budget for 2023-24 also includes provision for depreciation and any other non-cash costs.

The department also received income during the year arising from:

- Recoupment of electoral expenses;
- Receipts from the use of video conferencing facilities;
- Fees and costs recovered or received for work done for other departments;
- Freedom of information and data protection act receipts;
- Recovery of compensation paid; recoupment of grant funding;
- Costs and fees awarded in favour of the crown;
- Receipts arising from arms decommissioning;
- Fees and costs recovered or received for the use of the NIO estate; and
- Contributions from third parties to fund grant programmes and monies from other departments to fund projects in Northern Ireland.

During 2023-24, the Department received £8.5m additional funding at Supplementary Estimates, of which £7.9m was to provide funding for the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery which became an entity in December 2023.

Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)

The department's AME allocation for 2023-24 was £3.26m and was primarily related to provisions relating to litigation claims and leasehold property dilapidations in line with IFRS 16.

Non-Budget Expenditure

Non-budget expenditure totalling £23,954m was allocated to cover expenditure arising from:

- providing appropriate funding to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund for the delivery of transferred public services as defined by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Northern Ireland Act 2000 and the Northern Ireland Act 2009; and
- grants to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund and transfers of EU funds.

The department's final resource Estimate for 2023-24 was £23,999m (2022-23: £21,509m) and the department's final capital Estimate for 2023-24 was £11.33m (2022-23: £2.11m).

Comparison of Estimate and Outturn

Resource

The total outturn shown in the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply of these Accounts reflects underspend on both the Resource DEL and Resource AME Estimates due to lower than anticipated expenditure on programmes. The net resource outturn for 2023-24 was £20,948m (2022-23: £19,795m) compared with the Estimate of £23,999m (2022-23: £21,509m).

This is a variance of £3,051m (2022-23: £1,714m) which was due to:

- £3,055m funds anticipated to be required by the Northern Ireland Executive were not drawn down from the Consolidated Fund.
- A £5m underspend in AME due to a change in discount rate and foreign exchange differences for the Peace Plus Programme liability.
- Accounting for Prior Period Adjustments as set out in Note 23.
- Other underspends across the remainder of the Department and its ALBs due to lower than anticipated expenditure on programmes and services. This includes £1.4m relating to the ICRIR from when the entity went live in December 2023 and £1m in respect of the International Fund for Ireland

Capital

The net capital outturn for 2023-24 was £3.01m (2022-23: £0.41m) compared with the Estimate of £11.33m (2022-23: £2.11m). This is a variance of £8.32m (2022-23: £1.70m). This variance resulted from delays in capital expenditure for ICRIR on establishment.

Net Cash Requirement

The net cash requirement (note SOPS3) outturn was £21,240m (2022-23: £19,790m) compared with the Estimate of £24,318m (2022-23: £21,499m). This is a variance of £3,078m (2022-23: £1,709m). This variance resulted from lower than anticipated drawdowns made by the Northern Ireland Executive during the financial year.

Decisions on how funding to the Executive is spent are managed by the devolved administration and funding is allocated to the Northern Ireland Departments by the Department of Finance (DoF). Each of the Northern Ireland Departments, including DoF, publishes their own financial statements. Additional information regarding the budgets of the Executive and the grants paid by the NIO to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund are included in an Annex at the end of this report.

Statement of Financial Position

The net liabilities at 31 March 2024 of £189m (2022-23: £498m) occurs primarily due to an accrued liability for PEACE PLUS made in prior years of more than £500m.

This results in the continued material net liability on the Statement of Financial Position. Funding for the programme will be fully met via HMT Estimates processes through Annually Managed Expenditure funding. The recognition of this liability does not raise any uncertainty in relation to the department's going concern status.

The liabilities are disclosed net of assets, which principally comprise property, plant and equipment of which Hillsborough Castle and its surrounding estate is an asset of £83.7m (2022-23: £83.3m) as the remainder of the other assets and liabilities largely offset.

The financial assets include loans issued to DoF under the National Loans Fund, but these are balanced by corresponding amounts in current and non-current liabilities.

Hillsborough Castle's most recent valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2024 using indices supplied by Land and Property Services increasing the carrying value by c.£0.4m to c.£83.7m.

External Auditor

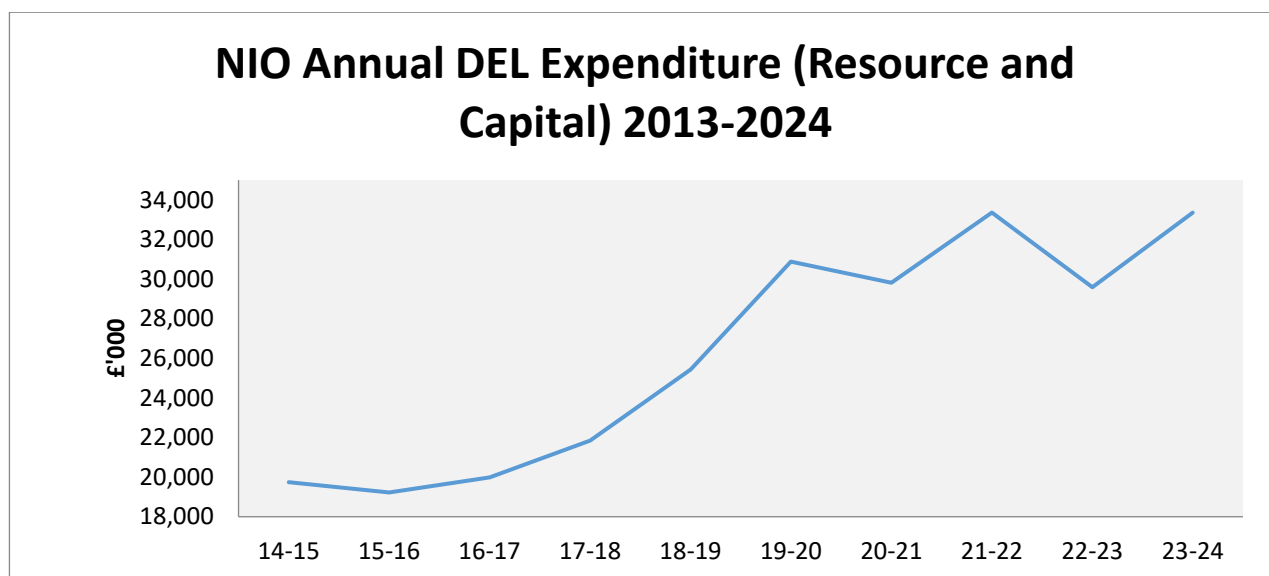
These accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) who is appointed by statute and reports to Parliament on the audit examination. His certificate is included in the Parliamentary accountability and audit report. The audit of the financial

statements for 2023-24 resulted in a group audit fee of £344,150 (cash fee £128,150, non-cash fee £216,000) (2022-23: £232,840; cash fee £53,540, non-cash fee £179,300).

The C&AG may also undertake other statutory activities that are not related to the audit of the department’s accounts such as value for money reports. No such reports directly related to the activities of the NIO were published during the year.

Long Term Expenditure Trends

The graph below shows NIO annual DEL expenditure over the past 10 years:



The outturn figures have been adjusted to exclude the impact of significant one-off additional areas of expenditure when additional funding was provided e.g. the European Elections and Assembly Elections in 2014-15, 2016-17, 2019-20 and 2022-23, as well as General Elections in 2015-16, 2017-18 and 2019-20. The increase since 2016 represents additional funding for new areas of expenditure and to address additional pressures e.g. EU Exit, PEACE PLUS as well as increased capital expenditure on IT and infrastructure projects and the decline from 2019-20 largely due to reduced or paused expenditure on items due to Covid-19. In 2021-22 there was additional spend in relation to the Centenary year, EONI Canvass and relocating from Stormont House to Erskine House.

Dr Julie Harrison
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024

Performance Analysis

The section below sets out in detail our four strategic priority outcomes and essential enabling activity with detail on what we have achieved during 2023-24.

Priority Outcome 1: Prosperity

Support the levelling up of Northern Ireland’s economy with the rest of the UK








Economic challenges such as inflation and low growth have continued to place pressure on the Northern Ireland economy and subsequently local households. Together with our partners, the department is developing an economic vision which seeks to address structural weaknesses in the economy, build resilience to deal with challenges brought about by rapid changes in the national and global economy, and create the conditions for transformative economic growth and drive forward the Government’s levelling up agenda. Key highlights delivered during 2023-24 include:

<p>£3.3bn Financial Support</p>		<p>Providing £3.3bn financial package for stabilising public sector finances and transforming public services, including provision of a new approach to assessment to ensure better alignment between funding allocation and the needs of Northern Ireland.</p>
<p>National and International Trade</p>		<p>Supporting development of the Command Paper, Safeguarding the Union, which strengthens the UK internal market and Northern Ireland’s place in the Union, and advances opportunities from the Windsor Framework to drive prosperity for Northern Ireland.</p>
<p>Regional Economic Growth</p>		<p>Progressing the four City and Growth Deals in Northern Ireland which include the: £1bn Belfast Region City Deal investment and Derry City & Strabane District Council City Deal, £250m investment; and, the Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal (£72m) and Mid- South West Region Growth Deal (£252m).</p>
<p>International Investment</p>		<p>Hosting the Northern Ireland Investment Summit (12-13 September 2023) which, in working alongside the UK Department for Business and Trade and Invest NI, brought together over 200 international investors to showcase Northern Ireland as a place for business investment.</p>
<p>Peace Programme Funding</p>		<p>Launching the €1.1bn PEACE PLUS programme (to which the UK Government has contributed £730m) to support continued peace and prosperity. The Programme will help to address longstanding Social and Economic challenges which continue to impact on communities, particularly those in rural border areas.</p>
<p>Targeted Investment</p>		<p>Supporting the development of the £150m Enhanced Investment Zone proposal, which will provide targeted incentives and interventions to encourage investment and boost growth.</p>
<p>Reducing Economic Inactivity</p>		<p>£40m New Deal funding to reduce economic inactivity under initiatives focussed on helping people, particularly those from an underprivileged background, to enter the workforce (JobStart) and to widen participation in further and higher education (Step Up).</p>

Priority Outcome 2: Society

Support greater integration and reconciliation in Northern Ireland

While the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in 1998 has helped to deliver peace and has enabled significant reconciliation, societal change does not happen overnight. In line with the principles of the Agreement, the UK Government remains committed to promoting inclusion, tolerance and openness in the expression of all identities within society, enhancing diversity and social understanding, facilitating integration and addressing the legacy of the past. Key highlights delivered during 2023-24 include:

<p>Independent Commission for Legacy</p>		<p>Completing the legislative passage of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 and establishing the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR), which became fully operational on 1 May 2024.</p>
<p>Health, Wellbeing and Relationships</p>	 	<p>Providing for legislation to ensure the provision of teaching of relationships and sexuality education in schools (The Relationships and Sexuality Education (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023).</p> <p>Supporting provisions to enable the roll out of abortion services.</p>
<p>Human Rights</p>		<p>Supporting the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in its world class human rights work.</p>
<p>Legacy Investigation</p>		<p>Establishing the Omagh bombing Inquiry into the preventability of the bombing in 1998.</p>
<p>UK Wide & Devolved Legislative arrangements</p>		<p>Supporting the smooth operation of the devolution settlement. Advocated for Northern Ireland's inclusion in the Post Office (Horizon System) Offences Bill which was amended to include Northern Ireland in April 2024.</p>
<p>Integrated Education</p>		<p>Supporting initiatives in schools to facilitate their transition towards integrated education. During 2023/24, 26 schools engaged with the initiative, 8 schools conducted parental ballots and 3 schools transformed or expanded their integrated education provision.</p>

Priority Outcome 3: Safety

Contribute to a safer Northern Ireland, where terrorist and paramilitary groups are less able to cause harm in communities

While the overall security situation in Northern Ireland is in no way comparable to that which existed during the Troubles, the department continues to work with all delivery partners to support efforts against the enduring threat and harms posed to communities by terrorist and paramilitary groups. The department's ongoing ambition is to help strengthen democracy and the role of law through supporting the delivery of a range of effective security justice, community and individual interventions. Key highlights delivered during 2023-24 include:

Independent Scrutiny and Governance



Supporting reviews of justice measures to ensure they are appropriate for the needs of the security environment, including facilitating completion of the annual reports of the:

- Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office
- Independent Reviewer of National Security Arrangements (IRNSA)
- Independent Reviewer of Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007
- Independent Reporting Commission's report on progress towards ending paramilitarism.

Transitioning Criminal Justice



Supporting the normalisation of reserved/excepted aspects of the Northern Ireland criminal justice system by:

- Completing a review of road closures (closed for security reasons) to ensure any closures are kept to the minimum level required to preserve peace and maintain order
- Monitoring the conditions required to remove Non-Jury Trial provisions.
- Scoping potential to develop a paramilitary group transition process.

National Security



Responding effectively to national security incidents and providing an assessment, from a Northern Ireland perspective, to inform and support the development of:

- The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation annual report
- CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism 2023

Justice and Security and Other Protective Measures









Updating the authorisation process regarding stop and search powers under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 to ensure more effective operation. Delivering statutory responsibilities including Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 compensation, prohibited weapons and firearms appeals.

Priority Outcome 4: Governance

Ensure that Governance in Northern Ireland is resilient and fiscally responsible in order to deliver effective public services

Instability and a lack of resilience in political structures in Northern Ireland provides a barrier to thriving communities, limiting the delivery of effective public services for the people of Northern Ireland and having an overall detrimental political, social, and economic impact. The UK Government’s priority is to ensure stable and effective devolved government within the Union, in full respect of the principle of consent enshrined in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Key highlights delivered during 2023-24 include:

<p>Devolved Institutions</p>		<p>Leading a series of engagements with Northern Ireland political parties, leading to multi-party talks in December 2023, publication of the Command Paper, “Safeguarding the Union”, and restoration of the devolved institutions in February 2024.</p>
<p>Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement anniversary</p>		<p>Facilitating a series of events marking the 25th Anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement engaging representatives across Northern Ireland society from business, politics, and the public and voluntary / community sector.</p>
<p>Devolved decision making and public services</p>		<p>Supporting Northern Ireland departments (during the period of suspension of the Northern Ireland Executive) to take decisions in the public interest to maintain delivery of public services, including the launch of five public consultations on revenue raising.</p>
<p>Diplomatic relations</p>		<p>Continuing to build strong diplomatic relations with our partners, such as strengthening our diplomatic presence in Washington and supporting British-Irish governmental relations through regular engagement via the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, British-Irish Council, British Irish Parliamentary Assembly and the British-Irish Association.</p>
<p>Election processes</p>		<p>Maintaining plans for elections in response to the Secretary of State’s election duties, including implementation of Boundary review and provisions of Elections Act.</p>
<p>Civic engagement</p>		<p>Engaging with 165+ civic organisations and civil leaders to discuss their perceptions of current issues and explain Northern Ireland Office policy.</p>

Strategic Enablers

Our strategic enablers sit at the heart of the NIO’s delivery plan and are critical to our success. They include our Estates & Services, Finance, Governance, HR, IT, Knowledge & Information Management, Strategic Planning, Private Office and departmental Security activities.

Over the course of the last reporting period, we have continued to ensure that we focus on living within our means, driving efficiencies, and reducing costs as far as possible. As part of our commitment to supporting continuous improvement, the Northern Ireland Office undertakes an annual review of compliance with those Government Functional Standards which are appropriate for a department of our size and best meet our business needs and priorities. Key enabling activities delivered during 2023/24 include:

<p>Strategy & HR</p>		<p>Continuing to develop the right strategic design, the right choices for Ministers, the right sequencing for implementation, and the right organisation of available resource. Continuing to improve HR services across the employee lifecycle, embedding a People Board and implementing a departmental diversity and inclusion action plan to enable the NIO to attract, recruit and retain talented people.</p>
<p>Governance</p>		<p>Establishing a People Board and Security & Information Board; onboarding a new Non-Executive Board member and conducting an independent Board effectiveness review.</p>
<p>Finance</p>		<p>Ensuring that the finance team was properly resourced and skilled to support the NIO and effectively manage its budget. Providing advice and engaging with HMT to support the increased financial support to sponsored bodies.</p>
<p>Information Management</p>		<p>Transferring 799 historic files to the National Archives and providing information management and data protection support to the ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry.</p>
<p>Estates</p>		<p>Supporting the ICRIR and Omagh Bombing Inquiry set up their new HQ accommodation; continuing liaison with the Govt. property Agency to assess options for a long-term accommodation solution in London</p>
<p>IT</p>		<p>Providing technical and Google support to the Covid-19 Response Team and refreshing over 60 NIO laptops; undertaking a review of NIO digital services and IT provision which will be taken forward in 2024/25</p>
<p>Security</p>		<p>Continuing to progress security vetting procedures with 106 cases granted</p>
<p>Data</p>		<p>Commissioning a feasibility study to review socio-economic data gaps and enhance UK-wide data and comparative regional analysis; implementing a framework for performance and contextual metrics</p>

Corporate Performance

Recruitment Practice

All Civil Service recruitment in the Northern Ireland Office is carried out in accordance with relevant employment legislation, including applicable equality and human rights laws, and the Recruitment Principles issued by the Civil Service Commission.

The Northern Ireland Office is committed to being an inclusive employer with a diverse workforce. The department encourages applications from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences to join the Northern Ireland Office. The department is focused on building an organisation that understands and values staff with a range of backgrounds, ideas, skills, and experience, as they contribute to greater creativity, innovation, and effective decision making in meeting our strategic objectives. During 2023-24, the NIO also offered people the opportunity to enhance their employability through the Apprenticeships programme.

Public Appointments

As at 31 March 2024, the NIO sponsored four executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies, an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body, and a range of smaller bodies, office holders and other entities. In addition, the NIO has responsibility for making appointments to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

During the reporting period, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland made the following appointments that were regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments:

- A new Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland;
- Four reappointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission;
- Four new members of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland, including the Chair, with the reappointment of a further two members; and
- A new Lead Non-Executive Commissioner and three Non-Executive Commissioners to the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments publishes further information on the department's regulated appointments, including statistical information, which can be found at:

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/publications/>

In addition to regulated appointments, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland also has responsibility for making appointments to a number of statutory and non-statutory positions in public life. In 2023-24, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland made the following non-regulated appointments:

- The appointment of a new Chair and Commissioner for Investigations for the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery;
- The appointment of a new Independent Reviewer of the Justice & Security Act and National Security Arrangements; and
- The reappointment of the Veterans Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

The NIO routinely publishes details of all new and renewed appointments in the news section of our website. Further information on the appointments made during 2023-24 are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/search/news-and-communications?organisations%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office&parent=northern-ireland-office>

Employee Consultation

The NIO recognises the importance of sustaining good employee relations to achieve its objectives. Facilitating a culture of constructive challenge and ongoing consultation with employees, and their representation, is central to that work.

Regular communication and consultation takes place with staff through a variety of channels, including the departmental intranet, weekly all staff meetings, staff bulletins, working groups, and other briefings. More formal consultation exercises also take place with staff, including through the Staff Engagement Group, and the Unions, on matters such as organisational change, and changes to staff terms and conditions, when necessary.

During the year, the NIO delivered a wide range of initiatives across the department that help make the NIO a great place to work. This included strengthening the Learning and Development offer and how that offer is communicated to all staff. The NIO's Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing group delivered a range of sessions including social mobility and National Inclusion Week. The NIO's Culture Club has played an important role in bringing NIO's values to life and supporting our charity partners.

The department worked closely with the Staff Engagement Group, which represents staff across all grades, and took their views on issues, ranging from wellbeing initiatives, as well as proposed changes to staff policies including changes to office based attendance. The NIO also continued to support the Mirror Board so that staff can provide views on wider operational and policy matters, and contribute to shaping strategic decision-making. This year, the department introduced a new People Board, which has responsibility for discussing and taking action in relation to a range of People opportunities and issues on behalf of NIO's Executive Committee.

There are a number of internal staff networks representing particular interests, including a learning and development volunteer group, and other groups that our staff can access through our relationship with the Ministry of Justice and the wider Civil Service.

Staff Engagement

The NIO participates in the Civil Service annual People Survey that captures employees' views on a number of issues. The results from the People Survey form an evidence base to support the department's people priorities. The results of the annual Civil Service People Survey were published in December 2023. The report, which combines NIO results with those for all Territorial Offices is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-people-survey-2023-results>

84% of eligible NIO staff completed the 2023 survey. The department performed well with the department's overall engagement score increasing from 61% to 64%, which matches the CS benchmark of 64%. The top three drivers of engagement were people's sense of accomplishment from work, feeling valued for their work, and having clear objectives.

This year's People Survey showed six out of the nine Core Themes scoring 70% or above, including 'My Team', 'Organisational Objectives' and 'Inclusion & Fair Treatment' theme scores. A People Survey response plan has been agreed by the People Board, focussing on themes including learning and development, recruitment, and bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Diversity and Inclusion

The NIO recognises the importance of embedding diversity in everything that the department does. The department has an active and enthusiastic diversity, inclusion and wellbeing network, who raise awareness and provide education on a range of topics including mental health and social mobility.

During 2023-24, the department has launched a new Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Action Plan to make further improvements to the diversity of representation at all levels, and continue to ensure the NIO is an inclusive place to work.

The NIO is committed to:

- eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by, or under, equality legislation;
- advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic, and persons who do not share it; and
- fostering good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The NIO is committed to being an organisation where everyone is:

- treated with fairness and respect;

- able to contribute and develop; and
- confident about how to ensure that the work they do supports equality of outcomes for everyone in society.

The NIO's people management policies and practices reflect the Civil Service Code and build on the equality legislation and legal obligations under Northern Ireland, and UK law.

Employment, Training and Advancement of Disabled Persons

The NIO is committed to securing, retaining, and developing people with a disability. The department has adopted Ministry of Justice policies for staff-related matters, including making reasonable adjustments, where necessary, for staff with disabilities. During the year, the department continued to monitor and report progress against the published Disability Action Plan that articulates our vision, our priorities, and sets out our measures, to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and encourages the participation by disabled people in public life. The plan makes a clear statement of our commitment to implementing our equality duties in relation to disability.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Group includes advocates for the promotion of diversity and inclusion across the whole department, including a lead on disability issues.

Learning and Development

The NIO is committed to supporting the learning and development of all staff to enable them to do their jobs to the best of their ability and to develop the necessary skills for the present and future. The department encourages staff to take up a minimum of five days each year to focus on learning and development, and we maintain a ring-fenced budget year-on-year to support this goal.

Staff at all grades can make use of the Civil Service Learning portal, as well as on-the-job and face to face learning. Learning for all colleagues is provided throughout the year, both on core competencies and leadership skills, and on business relevant learning. Line Managers monitor the progression of individual learning against agreed personal development plans, supported by the coaching focus of the department's performance development scheme.

Managing Attendance

Throughout the year the NIO kept a strong focus on the well-being of its staff. The majority of staff were able to fulfil their roles whilst working flexibly and being able to avail themselves of the new hybrid working model. The department supports staff by promoting flexible working, as well as providing mental health and wellbeing information on work-life balance options, on the department's staff intranet.

Sickness absence figures for the reporting year are included in the Staff Report and show that the average working days lost for the department was 3.1 days. This figure compares to a Civil Service average working days lost figure of 8.1 days as at March 2023.

Pensions

From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member's state pension age (or 65 if higher). From that date all newly-appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined alpha. Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: three providing benefits on a final salary basis (classic, premium and classic plus) with a normal pension age of 60; and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (nuvos) with a normal pension age of 65.

Those organisations within the boundary covered by the Scheme(s) meet the costs of the contributions paid by employers for their staff by the payment of Accrued Superannuation Liability Charges. This is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on an accrued basis annually.

The NIO is also required to meet the additional cost of benefits beyond the normal PCSPS (UK) and PCSPS (NI) benefits in respect of staff who retire early. The NIO provides in full for this cost, charged against the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, when the early retirement has been announced.

The pension benefits of NIO Board members are outlined in the [Remuneration Report](#).

Health and Safety

The NIO recognises its obligations under Health and Safety at Work legislation for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the development of an effective health and safety regime. During the period, the department ensured that it continued to remain compliant with all specific recommendations in relation to health and safety, and provide a safe working environment for all.

All staff are required to complete annual mandatory health & safety training, and regular risk assessments of workstations are required to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) regulations 1992 and that the right interventions are made to increase the safety and wellbeing of all our colleagues. In addition, the department keeps its health and safety guidance under review, and makes policies available to all staff on the department's intranet. During 2023-24, there were no accidents reported to the relevant authorities (nil in 2022-23).

Social, Community and Environmental Responsibility

The NIO, as part of its corporate responsibility agenda, actively promotes awareness of social, community and environmental issues on its staff intranet, and is committed to promoting inclusion, social mobility, and equality through its human resources and other corporate policies. A major contributor to this is the encouragement of volunteering, whether individually or in groups, including providing special leave for this purpose. Information on volunteering is made easily available to staff through the department's intranet.

The Civil Service has a long tradition of supporting staff to volunteer, and the NIO is committed to making a positive impact on the community in which it operates. The Northern Ireland Office offers up to five days' special leave for each member of staff to undertake volunteering. Staff can organise their own volunteering activity, or can visit www.do-it.org.uk for ideas and information on volunteering.

Fraud/Whistleblowing/Raising a Concern

The NIO has robust arrangements in place for the prevention, detection and reporting of fraud, and is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty, and accountability. Our arrangements follow the principles outlined in the HM Treasury's publication *Managing Public Money*, and Civil Service policies on whistleblowing or raising a concern about any suspicions on matters that staff think are wrong, illegal or endangers others, including fraud, bribery or corruption.

During the reporting period, the department kept its counter fraud policy and nominated whistleblowing officers under review. Updated guidance for staff was published on counter fraud policy and this was supported by a staff discussion. There was one case of fraud (less than £500) during the year, however, there were no special payments / losses. There were no reported cases of whistleblowing during 2023-24 (nil in 2022-23).

Estates Management Strategy

The NIO is a tenant within two UK Government hubs located in Erskine House, Belfast and Horse Guards Road, London. The accommodation is maintained under lease arrangements with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Government Property Agency (GPA) respectively. Some accommodation, and a small office for ministers, are also available at Hillsborough Castle, however, responsibility for the management and day-to-day running of Hillsborough Castle rests with the charity, Historic Royal Palaces.

Payment of Suppliers

The NIO paid on average 83% (83% in 2022-23) of invoices within five working days, 89% (91% in 2022-23) within 10 working days, and 96% (97% in 2022-23) within 30 working days, during the reporting period.

Better Regulation

The NIO is committed to producing less, and better, regulation in line with the government's general principles of regulation. As such, the department continually looks for ways to reduce regulation, where possible. As part of this process, the department is committed to actively promoting the better regulation agenda across the Northern Ireland departments and representing the needs of the devolved administration in Whitehall, and vice versa.

During the reporting period, the NIO published one consultation regarding the proposed regulations about holding and handling of information by the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery. All NIO consultations are available on our website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office&publication_filter_option=consultations

Parliamentary Questions

The UK Government has committed to providing departmental Parliamentary Question statistics to the Procedure Committee of the House of Commons on a sessional basis. NIO statistics for 2023-24 are intended for publication on the Committee's website in due course.

Complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman

No complaints were made to the Parliamentary Ombudsman about the department during the reporting period.

Political and Charitable Donations

The NIO did not make any political or charitable donations in 2023-24 (nil in 2022-23).

Freedom of Information requests

Statistics on Freedom of Information requests in central government, including those for the NIO, are published quarterly at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics>

Transparency

The NIO, in line with the UK Government's transparency agenda, regularly publishes information on any significant areas of expenditure, and other items of public interest at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/latest?departments%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office>

Sustainability Report

Overview

This Sustainability report has been prepared in accordance with 2023-2024 guidelines as set out in The Government Financial Reporting Manual: 2023-24.

The NIO has reported on climate-related financial disclosures consistent with HM Treasury's TCFD-aligned disclosure application guidance, which interprets and adapts the framework for the UK public sector. Climate is not considered a principle risk for the NIO, however we have undertaken activity to comply with the TCFD recommendation and recommended disclosure relating to:

- Governance - recommended disclosures (a) and (b)
- Metric and Targets - recommended disclosure (b)

This is in line with the central government's TCFD-aligned disclosures implementation timetable for Phase 1. The NIO intends to provide the recommended disclosure for Strategy, Risk Management and Metrics and Targets in future periods, following the central government implementation timetable.

The NIO is committed to minimising the impact we have on our environment and supporting the wider UK Government's Net-Zero commitment. Our approach encourages sustainable decision-making and establishes greener ways of working; increases inclusive staff engagement and communication of our ambitions; supports our building owners to meet Government targets and ensures people are making good choices; reduces waste, promotes recycling and sustainable repurposing of equipment, and greener procurement.

Governance

Given the areas the NIO has the ability to control in relation to its climate impact, climate related matters are reviewed on an annual basis by the Board, unless significant risks or opportunities materialise.

The Executive Committee (ExCo) will review climate-related matters at three meetings per annum, as a minimum. One of these instances which will coincide with the departmental budget setting process, to ensure climate matters have been reviewed as part of this process.

The Strategic Enabler Programme Board (STEP), a sub-committee of ExCo, will develop and maintain a climate risk and opportunity register. STEP will also review and consider climate related-matters and will make recommendations to ExCo when formal decisions are required.

Metric and targets

The NIO, for the first time, has sought to apply Greening Government Commitment (GGC) emissions methodology for metrics, having been out of scope for sustainability reporting previously.

Over 2023-24 the department has initiated methods of capturing this data and will highlight areas where further work is required. 2024-25 will provide the opportunity to mature the collection of GGC data and will enable a more accurate baseline of emissions in 2024-25, which in 2025-26 will enable the NIO to set targets against our emissions.

Greening Government Commitments

The Greening Government Commitments (GGCs) launched on 1 April 2011 requires UK Government to take action to significantly reduce environmental impact. These commitments can be found at:

[Greening Government Commitments 2021 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

The table below set out the areas on which the NIO has captured information on the Government Greening Commitment:

	2023-24
Air Travel (CO2e tonnes)	396
Air Miles	1,031,185
Rail Travel (CO2e tonnes)	0.50
Rail Miles	8,807
Taxi Travel (CO2e tonnes)	2.41
Taxi Miles	8,978
Car Travel (CO2e tonnes)	0.63
Hire Car Travel (CO2e tonnes)	5.11
Car Miles (total)	25,807
Paper (Reams)	200

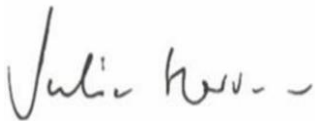
The NIO are based at 1 Horseguards in London and Erskine House in Belfast. The NIO do not own and are not the sole occupants of either location. The buildings are shared with other UK Government departments, and are provided by the Government Property Agency (GPA) as a managed service. It is not possible to identify the individual responsibility of each organisation to the overall sustainability of each building. Share occupations are not accounted for due to the difficulties of extrapolating reliable sustainability data from service charges. Additionally, the NIO does not report on any emissions for any of our Arms' Length Bodies, as they fall below the requirements for TCFD and because the NIO does not have the ability to influence the emission which they generate.

Carbon Reduction Commitment

The NIO have put in place a number of measures necessary to adapt to future climate change. Where the NIO draws on services supplied by the Government Property Agency under contract to them, the Office's contribution to UK Government commitments on environmental impact and sustainability are met within those wider frameworks.

The NIO are committed to reducing their environmental impact by:

- Encouraging the use of video conferencing and dial-in facilities rather than travelling to meetings;
- Using recycled paper and other stationery;
- Using public transport rather than cars when travelling to meetings; and
- Ensuring that our printers and photocopiers are all energy efficient models which reduce paper wastage.



Dr Julie Harrison
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

Directors Report

NIO Lead Non-Executive Board Members Report



Les Philpott

Lead Non-Executive Board Member and Chair of the NIO Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Introduction

This is my fourth report as the Northern Ireland Office's Lead Non-Executive Board member and Chair of the NIO Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). My report reflects on the work of the Board and the Committee over the last twelve months. It has been prepared in line with HM Treasury guidance, and is based on the information and assurances that were provided to the Board and the Committee during the year.

2023-24 Overview

During this reporting period, the department has continued to deliver against its Priority Outcomes while for the better part of the year it also dealt with the challenges and issues arising from the absence of a functioning Assembly. Throughout the year the Board and the ARAC have taken assurance from the reports received that the governance arrangements in place are working effectively. Principally, the reporting has included regular progress updates from the Outcome Delivery Programme Boards that have provided assurance on how performance and risk has been managed effectively.

The restoration of the Executive represents a significant achievement for the department that reflects the determination and dedication of all concerned to ensure local accountability in the form of a working devolved government in Northern Ireland. Alongside this the legal establishment of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery in December 2023 was another significant milestone for the NIO and the culmination of a sustained effort over the last two years to put in place the governance framework, policies and procedures, contractual arrangements, a Board of Commissioners and staffing to ensure that the body was able to commence operations on 1 May 2024.

A key focus for the next 12 months, and in the next iteration of the department's delivery plan for 2024-25, will be to build on the progress made during the last reporting period to achieve the Secretary of State's vision to make Northern Ireland a better place to live, work and invest.

Board Membership and Effectiveness

The Board met four times during 2023-24 and considered a wide range of strategic and corporate issues, as well as scrutinising performance and risk management.

During the year an independent effectiveness review was undertaken with the final report being presented to the Board in March 2024. The report highlighted that the Board was operating effectively and in line with Code of Practice on Corporate Governance in central government departments; however, ten observations for improvement were noted. These included refocusing the Board agenda and forward look, updating the Board Operating Framework and reviewing the number of regular attendees. All observations have been accepted in full and an Action Plan to implement them has been agreed by the Board with action already taken on a number of the observations. I will be monitoring the implementation of the outstanding actions over the next reporting period.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

The ARAC met five times during 2023-24, including a technical meeting to discuss the 2022-23 Annual Report and Accounts, and conducted a series of deep dives into functional risk areas including the department's Outcome Delivery prioritisation and resourcing allocation, and Legacy programme, with a particular focus on the establishment of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

During each of the meetings, the Committee was provided with a copy of the full risk register and challenged the executive team attendees on the department's approach to managing risks, issues and opportunities, including the assessment of risk and mitigations in place. The Committee was generally satisfied with the department's approach to risk management and that appropriate consideration was being given to risk at all levels of the organisation. When necessary the Committee made suggestions to improve risk reporting and I am satisfied that the department gave due consideration to views expressed by the Committee.

The Committee also had oversight of the work of the internal and external auditors. The Committee also took assurance from the bi-annual Stewardship Statements provided by senior officials and sponsored bodies. At each meeting, the Committee was provided with a risk analysis of each of the departments sponsored bodies. While no significant issues were identified in respect of the sponsored bodies the Committee welcomes the department's commitment to review its sponsorship arrangements in the next reporting period.

A review of the Committee's effectiveness was undertaken during the reporting period with the results reviewed at the January 2024 ARAC meeting. Overall the review concluded that the Committee was effective, understands its role and had the right balance of skills to function effectively.

The NIO Permanent Secretary and Accounting Officer attended all Committee meetings during 2023; however, from the start of 2024 it was agreed by the Committee that while there will continue to be an open invite that attendance would only be required at key meetings during the year with regular updates from the executive team being provided by the NIO Chief Operating Officer. This arrangement will ensure that the Committee can continue to be briefed on matters within its remit and that there is regular senior executive attendance to support the discussions on delivery performance and management of risk.

Representatives from internal and external auditors also attended each meeting and provided audit reports accordingly. The Committee acknowledges that the overall internal audit opinion reported a 'moderate' level of assurance for 2023-24 and noted some common themes identified by auditors. I took assurance from the plans put in place by the department to address capacity issues and the commitment to review policies and procedures as part of addressing the recommendations from the audits undertaken during the year. The Committee will monitor progress against the implementation of all outstanding recommendations in the next reporting period.

Relationships with Other Audit Committees

The Northern Ireland Office now sponsors four executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs): the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR), the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland (PCNI), and the Independent Reporting Commission (IRC).

Each of these bodies has its own Accounting Officer and the ICRIR, NIHRC, and PCNI operate independent Audit Committees. Due to their limited budget responsibilities, the IRC has not established its own Audit Committee and the NIO ARAC provides this oversight instead.

During the reporting period, the Committee kept a watching brief on key issues affecting all sponsored bodies and took assurance from the updates provided by sponsor teams, the stewardship statement process, and updates on the external audit activities. I had the opportunity to meet my fellow Audit Chairs in September 2023 to discuss matters of common interest, and took assurance from them that each NDPB was operating effective governance arrangements. I have also been invited by the ICRIR to observe meetings of its Audit Committee and look forward to engaging with its chair over the next reporting period.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my fellow non-executive team members for their continued support and am pleased to note that Neil Sayers has been reappointed for a further term as non-executive member of the NIO ARAC until 30 September 2027.

Les Philpott

Northern Ireland Office Ministers and Board Members as at 31 March 2024

Ministers



The Rt. Hon. Chris Heaton-Harris MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland



The Rt. Hon. Steve Baker MP
Minister of State



Lord Caine
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Officials



Dr Julie Harrison
Permanent Secretary



Dominic Wilson
Director General



Dr Caroline Hacker
Chief Operating Officer

Non-Executive Board Members



Les Philpott
Lead Non-Executive



Fiona Ross
Non-Executive

Further information about our governance is available on our website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/northern-ireland-office>

Permanent Secretary

The Permanent Secretary for the NIO from April until June 2023 was Madeleine Alessandri. Julie Harrison joined the NIO as Permanent Secretary in September 2023.

Other Reporting Entities

The names of the chair and chief executive, or equivalent, of the Northern Ireland Office's other reporting entities as at 31 March 2024 were as follows:

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Chief Commissioner: Alyson Kilpatrick
Director/Chief Executive: Dr David Russell

Parades Commission for Northern Ireland

Chief Commissioner: Professor Evelyn Collins CBE
Secretary: Susan Senior (Acting)

Independent Reporting Commission

Chief Commissioner: Not Applicable
UK Joint Secretary: Chris Atkinson

Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

Chief Commissioner: Sir Declan Morgan
Interim Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner: Tristan Pedelty

Further information on the performance and governance of each of these entities can be found in their respective Annual Reports & Accounts which are available on their websites.

Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 ("the GRAA"), HM Treasury has directed the Northern Ireland Office to prepare, for each financial year, consolidated resource accounts. These accounts must detail the resources acquired, held, or disposed of, and the use of resources, during the year by the department and its sponsored non-departmental and other sponsored bodies designated by order made under the GRAA by Statutory Instrument 2024 number 295. The 'departmental group', comprises the department and sponsored bodies listed at note 20 to the accounts.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the department, and the departmental group, and of the income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity, and cash flows of the departmental group for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by HM Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Ensure that the department has in place appropriate and reliable systems and procedures to carry out the consolidation process;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis, including those judgements involved in consolidating the accounting information provided by non-departmental and other sponsored bodies;
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- Prepare the accounts on a going concern basis; and
- Confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable, and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Principal Accounting Officer and the Board confirms that this Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced, and understandable. The Principal Accounting Officer takes personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

HM Treasury appointed Madeleine Alessandri as Principal Accounting Officer of the NIO with effect from 6 March 2020 until her departure on 30 June 2023. Dominic Wilson was appointed interim Principal Accounting Officer of the NIO with effect from 1 July 2023 until Julie Harrison was appointed to the role on 16 October 2023.

The Principal Accounting Officer of the department has also appointed the Chief Executives or equivalents of its sponsored non-departmental and other bodies as Accounting Officers of those bodies. During the reporting period, David Russell was Accounting Officer for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Sarah Teer was the Accounting Officer for the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland until 31 December 2023 at which point Susan Senior was appointed as the interim Accounting Officer, Chris Atkinson was the Accounting Officer for the Independent Reporting Commission, and Tristan Pedelty was Accounting officer for the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery following its legal establishment on 14 December 2023.

The Principal Accounting Officer of the department is responsible for ensuring that appropriate systems and controls are in place to ensure that any grants that the department makes to its sponsored bodies are applied for the purposes intended, and that such expenditure and the other income and expenditure of the sponsored bodies are properly

accounted for, for the purposes of consolidation within the resource accounts. Under their terms of appointment, the Accounting Officers of the sponsored bodies are accountable for the use, including the regularity and propriety, of the grants received and the other income and expenditure of the sponsored bodies.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records, and for safeguarding the assets of the department or sponsored body, are set out in *Managing Public Money*, published by HM Treasury.

As the Principal Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the NIO's auditors are aware of that information. As far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

Governance Statement

Introduction

The NIO governance statement records the stewardship of the organisation, drawing together evidence on governance and risk management, to give a sense of how successfully the department has responded to the challenges and changes faced during the year.

As Principal Accounting Officer, I took assurance from discussions with the previous NIO Accounting Officer and this governance statement represents my assurance to Parliament that I am satisfied that the department's system of internal control is effective and supports good decision making. This statement is in accordance with HM Treasury guidance. It sets out the governance structures, the internal control and risk management procedures that have operated within the Northern Ireland Office during the financial year 2023-24, and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts. The systems in place, as outlined in this statement, are designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risks of failure to achieve policies, aims, and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

This statement covers the core department, with the following four sponsored public bodies producing their own governance statements, which are published in their Annual Report and Accounts:

- The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission;
- The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland;
- The Independent Reporting Commission; and
- The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

My relationship with the Accounting Officers of these bodies is set out in the respective Framework Agreements and designator letters.

Compliance with the Corporate Governance Code

The Northern Ireland Office abides by the principles and spirit of the principles set out in: *Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice 2017*.

The Code recognises there is not a 'one size fits all model' for boards, and the 'comply or explain' mechanism enables departments to deviate from the principles and supporting provisions, if justifiable, for good governance of the department. Given that the department is considerably smaller than most central government departments, and has a limited budget and responsibilities by comparison, it would be disproportionate to implement some of the detailed provisions in the Code when good governance can be achieved by other, more proportionate means. I am satisfied that where the department deviates from the Code, that there is a proportionate and justifiable rationale to do so.

Northern Ireland Office Board

The Northern Ireland Office Board forms the collective strategic and operational leadership of the department, bringing together its ministerial and civil service leaders with senior non-executives from outside government. Its purpose is to provide advice, challenge, and assurance on the department's Outcomes Delivery Plan, to monitor performance, and to advise on significant risks. An independent Audit, and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) and an Executive Committee (ExCo) support the Board.

During the reporting period the Board met four times and considered a wide range of strategic and corporate issues, as well as scrutinising performance and risk management. The Board was fully engaged in monitoring the use of resources including how the department was responding to the unique challenges to deliver the priorities in the Outcome Delivery Plan. Further information on performance during the year is reported in the [Performance Analysis section](#).

The Board took particular assurance from regular deep dives that scrutinised the delivery performance of business areas and sponsored bodies. A particular focus at each Board meeting was the scrutiny of the corporate risk register. The Lead non-executive board member also played a key role in challenging the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the risk register.

Further information on how the Board operated, assessed its effectiveness in-year, and assessed the quality of the information and support it received, can be found in the Lead Non-Executive Board Member report.

Board Membership and Attendance

The table below sets out attendance for Board meetings attended by members from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024:

Name	Position	Date joined / departed Board	Eligible meetings	Absent
Chris Heaton-Harris	Secretary of State	Departed July 2024	4	0
Steve Baker	Minister of State	Departed July 2024	4	0
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State	Departed July 2024	4	2
Madeleine Alessandri	Permanent Secretary	Departed June 2023	1	0
Julie Harrison	Permanent Secretary	Joined September 2023	3	1
Dominic Wilson	Director General	-	4	0

Caroline Hacker	Chief Operating Officer	-	4	0
Les Philpott	Lead Non-Executive	-	4	0
Fiona Ross	Non-Executive	-	4	0

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (ExCo) is the senior leadership of the Northern Ireland Office, chaired by the Permanent Secretary. It operates under delegated authority of the Board, and within the overall strategic context set by ministers, with particular responsibility for delivering on operational priorities, and setting the culture and tone for the department. It makes collective decisions on corporate issues, and actively monitors departmental delivery and performance. ExCo also provides leadership on diversity and inclusion, and the health and wellbeing of departmental staff.

During the year, ExCo focused on delivering the priorities in the department's Outcome Delivery Plan, as well as reviewing departmental risks and opportunities. The Committee also undertook deep dives on a range of issues including Digital Transformation, Diversity and Inclusion, 2023 People Survey, as well as implementation of the new legacy body, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery. Staff and wellbeing and resourcing was also a key priority for ExCo throughout the year.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) supports the Board and Principal Accounting Officer by providing an independent view of the risk, internal control, and governance arrangements, and assessing the comprehensiveness, reliability, and integrity of those assurances.

The Committee also reviews and makes recommendations to the Principal Accounting Officer on the preparation and sign-off of the annual accounts. In line with the requirements of the Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice 2017 and HM Treasury's Audit and Risk Assurance handbook the ARAC is chaired by a non-executive board member. The current chair is the Lead Non-Executive Director, Les Philpott.

The table below sets out the attendance of members from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024:

Name	Date joined / departed	Eligible meetings	Absent
Les Philpott	-	5	0
Neil Sayers	-	5	0
Fiona Ross	-	5	3

During the reporting year, regular reports on the ARAC's work were provided to the Principal Accounting Officer and the Board. Further information on the membership and work of the ARAC can be found in the [Lead Non-Executive Board Members Report](#).

Register of Interests

The Northern Ireland Office maintains a register of Board and Committee members' interests, with details of company directorships and other significant interests held by members. The register is a living document and all interests declared by members are considered by the Principal Accounting Officer, who must be satisfied that any potential conflict can be managed. Declarations of any new interests is a standing agenda item for all Board and Committee meetings.

The interests registered by Board members as at 31 March 2024 are set out below:

Name	Position / Interest
Julie Harrison	Close family relative is a Board Member of Derry City Airport
Dominic Wilson	None declared
Caroline Hacker	None declared
Les Philpott	Non-Executive Board Chair, Government Actuary's Department Non-Executive Director, Benenden Healthcare Society Ltd
Fiona Ross	Non-Executive Director, Network Rail Non-Executive Director, Scottish Government Chair, C�oras Iompair �ireann (CI�) Chair, National Paediatric Hospital Development Board Non-Executive Director, JK Funds Non-Executive Director, Evelyn Partners Non-Executive Director, SphereInvest Independent Shareholder Advisor, Bristol City Council

	Chair, Natural Capital Ireland Non-Executive Director, The National Treasury Management Agency
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Northern Ireland Office's processes for registering outside interests and employments apply to all executive and non-executive members of the Board and Committees, and to all Senior Civil Servants working in the department. For those staff below the Senior Civil Service, the declaration and management of interests is in line with MoJ policies and the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

In addition to the requirements set out above for the register of interests, and in line with the current Declaration of Interests policy for Special Advisers, all Special Advisers have declared any relevant interests, or confirmed they do not consider they have any relevant interests. The Principal Accounting Officer has considered these returns, and there are no relevant interests to be published.

Business Appointment Rules

In compliance with Business Appointment rules, the department is transparent in the advice given to individual applications for senior staff, including Special Advisers, and this information is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/search/transparency-and-freedom-of-information-releases?organisations%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office&parent=northern-ireland-office>

During 2023-24, the department did not issue any decision on any application submitted under the Business Appointment Rules (nil in 2022-23).

Internal Audit

HM Treasury mandates that internal audit must give a year-end assurance on the effectiveness of a department's governance, risk, and internal control environment, and this assurance is a source of evidence underpinning the Principal Accounting Officer's Governance Statement.

Internal audit services are provided to the NIO by the Government's Internal Audit Agency, who work in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The work of internal auditors includes reviewing information and holding meetings with senior management, to look at the governance, risk, and internal control framework.

The Head of Internal Audit from the Government's Internal Audit Agency provides an annual assurance to the department's Principal Accounting Officer, by way of an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk, and internal control arrangements. Their internal audit opinion is informed by the internal audit work carried out throughout the

reporting period. Their annual work plan is developed in agreement with senior management, the Principal Accounting Officer and the NIO's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and is informed by an analysis of the risks to which the NIO is exposed.

The Internal Audit opinion for 2023-24 reported no significant control issues, and gave a "moderate" level of assurance that the NIO's overall risk, internal control, and governance framework is adequate to enable the achievement of its objectives, and that the department's key risks are being effectively managed. A common theme cutting across the internal audits completed within this reporting period, and the previous year, was capacity issues. Therefore, I have taken steps to ensure that these are addressed as a priority to strengthen the control environment in the coming financial year.

Risk Management

During the year, the Board reviewed risks associated with the delivery of its strategic priorities and objectives at each of its meetings, particularly the risks that emerged from the continuing absence of a functioning NI Executive and impact on the delivery of public services in Northern Ireland. The Board also regularly reviewed its approach to risk management to ensure that key risks had been identified and appropriate actions were in place to manage the level of risk to an acceptable level.

ExCo regularly reviewed those operational business risks and opportunities with the highest risk ratings commissioning further consideration or action as appropriate. The ARAC was also presented with a quarterly summary of the departmental risk and opportunity register and undertook deep dives into specific risk areas including reviewing the IRC risk register and NIO Outcome Delivery risks, as well as the risks associated with the legal establishment of the ICRIR. Outcome Delivery Programme Boards focused on reviewing and managing lower level risk captured in relation to each of the four priority outcomes that were identified and escalated to Programme Boards by individual business areas.

Over the reporting year, the department consolidated its integrated approach to operational performance reporting and risk management to ensure that risks remain aligned to the department's Outcome Delivery Plan, and that risk is properly and appropriately managed across the department at the right level. This joined-up approach facilitates consideration of the interrelationship between delivery milestones and associated risks at monthly Outcome Delivery Programme Board review meetings as well as providing a clear and transparent record of all changes made to the departmental and programme level risk registers. This process also includes consideration of opportunities which are captured in a similar format to risks and similarly considered at Programme Board, ExCo and Board level.

The restoration of the NI Executive has had a material impact on the NIO's risk landscape and continues to evolve to ensure that it reflects the corporate and operational risks that face the Department including the challenges in establishing the new Legacy body and external

risks such as the long term stability of the Executive and NI fiscal challenges.

During 2023-24 the department also developed an Assurance Map to provide a structured way to document the main sources and types of assurance for each of the department's auditable functions, as well as providing a means to ensure that assurance activities are coordinated. The Assurance map will be reviewed and updated annually in line with the NIO business planning cycle and will help inform future audit planning and the Annual Audit opinion as well as supporting the Governance Statement in the department's Annual Report and Accounts.

The Board also took assurance from the Annual Risk Assurance report as well as the oversight provided by ExCo on the effectiveness of the internal controls to manage operational level risk, and from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of the overall risk management framework. Taken together these inform the Department's wider assurance framework and confirm that, overall, risk management practices are compliant with the principles set out in the Orange Book.

Information and tools for effective risk management are available to all staff on the department's intranet. Our Risk Management Policy includes advice on maintaining risk registers, risk escalation, risk mitigation, and communication processes. At regular intervals, assurance is sought from each business area that risk management requirements are being complied with. The Chief Operating Officer acts as risk champion at Board level to support the department's approach to managing risk.

Information Assurance

During the year, information assurance and information security updates were provided to the Board, ExCo, and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. A Security & Information Assurance Committee was also established in January 2024 with a remit to monitor breaches and provide advice and assurance on departmental security and information matters.

Although the department does not handle large quantities of personal data, we maintain robust internal processes and provide training and guidance to all staff on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Our Data Protection Officer, also provides advice and support to our sponsored bodies and monitors compliance.

During the year there were two data breaches reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (none in 2022-23). In both cases an internal investigation was conducted and remedial action taken to avoid recurrence.

Stewardship Statements

Each Deputy Director in the core department, and the senior official in each sponsored body, signs a stewardship statement providing assurance to the Principal Accounting Officer on

governance, risk management, and the operation of internal controls within their business areas. These stewardship statements clearly set out the internal controls that should be in place, and the steps taken to monitor the effectiveness of those controls.

The statements are normally reviewed in-year, and an assessment of the effectiveness of those controls is also carried out at the end of the reporting year. The Board and the ARAC review a summary report of the effectiveness of the internal control measures at mid-year and the year-end. For 2023-24, no significant concerns were identified following the end of year review.

Transparency Reporting

The NIO publishes monthly data on spend over £25,000, GPC payments over £500 and Workforce Management Information as well as publishing quarterly data on gifts, hospitality, meetings and travel for ministers, senior officials and special advisors alongside data on prompt payment and senior civil servants in post. For 2023-24 the majority of these datasets were published in accordance with the Cabinet Office publication timelines on Gov.uk and were published on data.gov.uk. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/search/transparency-and-freedom-of-information-releases?organisations%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office&parent=northern-ireland-office>

Sponsored Bodies

During 2023-24, the Northern Ireland Office's senior management team regularly engaged with senior officials from our sponsored bodies; these meetings covered a wide range of operational and governance matters. Assurances were also sought that each sponsored body was operating sound governance arrangements through the stewardship statement arrangements. In addition to reviewing these assurances, the Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee received quarterly updates on general governance matters, and engaged directly with a number of sponsored bodies.

I took assurance from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, senior sponsors, and the governance statements produced by the department's Non-Departmental Public Bodies (which are subject to review by both internal and external auditors) that all the NIO sponsored bodies were continuing to operate effectively and efficiently.

Summary of Effectiveness

For the period 2023-24, I am able to report that there were no significant weaknesses in the Northern Ireland Office's system of internal controls, which affected the achievement of its key policies, aims, and objectives.

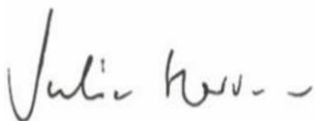
In-year, the departmental Board of the Northern Ireland Office kept its effectiveness, its approach to risk management, and how it operated, under review. I am satisfied with the quality of the information presented to the Board, and that its leadership, performance, and approach to business, provided effective support to ministers and senior officials in directing the business of the department.

In respect of the Northern Ireland Office's sponsored bodies that are required to publish separate audited accounts, no material issues have been reported to me, and all the department's sponsored bodies accounts were published at the date of this report.

In addition to the audited accounts for sponsored bodies, the department also has responsibility for electoral policy in Northern Ireland, and for publishing the expenses of the Returning Officer for Northern Ireland. These costs are consolidated and reported on through the Northern Ireland Office group accounts (see Note 21).

Finally, as noted in the Sustainability report the NIO has for the first time sought to apply Greening Government Commitment (GGC) emissions methodology for metrics and report against the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations. While the NIO has a limited ability to exercise control in relation to climate impact and climate related matters the NIO board and its committees will nevertheless continue to focus on this area of work in the next reporting period and give due consideration to both risks and opportunities.

No Ministerial directions were issued to me in my role as the Principal Accounting Officer for the Northern Ireland Office during the reporting period.



Dr Julie Harrison
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024

Remuneration and Staff Report

Overview

The remuneration and staff report summarises the department's policy on remuneration of ministers, executive board members, non-executive board members and staff. It also provides details of actual costs and contractual arrangements. The remuneration and staff report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Reporting Manual 2023-24 as issued by HM Treasury.

Remuneration policy

The remuneration of senior civil servants (SCS) is set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries. The Review Body on Senior Salaries also advises the Prime Minister from time to time on:

- the pay and pensions of MPs and their allowances
- peers' allowances
- the pay, pensions and allowances of ministers and others whose pay is determined by the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975 (as amended)

In reaching its recommendations, the Review Body on Senior Salaries has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities
- regional and local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff
- government policies for improving the public services, including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services
- the funds available to departments as set out in the government's departmental expenditure limits
- the government's inflation target

The Review Body on Senior Salaries takes account of the evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations. Further information about the work of the Review Body on Senior Salaries can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/review-body-on-senior-salaries.

Board members and senior civil servants remuneration

The salaries of NIO's Departmental Board members (excluding the ministerial and non-executive members) are determined in line with the Cabinet Office SCS reward policy. Non-consolidated performance-related payments for senior civil servants are determined by the Executive Committee (SCS Pay Band 1 and 2) and the Nominations Committee (SCS Pay Band 3).

Service contracts

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 require Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commission can be found here: <https://civilservicecommission.org.uk>.

Ministers' salaries and pension entitlements

This section and the related tables have been subject to audit

The salaries, taxable benefits in kind and pension entitlements of ministers are shown in the following tables. Salary figures include all allowances payable by the Office, whereas full-year equivalents are calculated net of allowances, bonuses and ex gratia Payments.

In respect of ministers in the House of Commons, departments bear only the cost of the additional Ministerial remuneration; the salary for their services as an MP £86,584 (from 1 April 2023) and various allowances to which they are entitled are borne centrally. However, the arrangement for ministers in the House of Lords is different in that they do not receive a salary but rather an additional remuneration, which cannot be quantified separately from their Ministerial salaries. This total remuneration, as well as the allowances to which they are entitled, is paid by the Department and is therefore shown in full in the figures below.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the Department and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. No minister received benefits in kind in 2023-24 or 2022-23.

Remuneration (salary and payments in kind)

Ministers	Salary (£)		Pension benefits (to nearest £1,000) ¹		Total (to nearest £1,000)	
	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23
The Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (from 6 th September 2022)	67,505	38,440 (67,505 FYE)	18,000	10,000	86,000	48,000
The Rt Hon Steve Baker MP, Minister of State for Northern Ireland Office (from 7 th September 2022)	31,680	17,952 (31,680 FYE)	8,000	5,000	40,000	23,000
Lord Caine Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (from 5 th November 2021) ²	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (from 13 th February 2020 to 6 th July 2022) ³	-	17,965 (67,505 FYE)	-	4,000	-	39,000
The Rt. Hon. Conor Burns MP, Minister of State for Northern (from 16 th September 2021 to 6 th September 2022)	-	15,840 (31,680 FYE)	-	3,000	-	19,000
Rt Hon Shailesh Vara MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (from 7 th July 2022 to 5 th September 2022) ⁴	-	11,100 (67,505 FYE)	-	3,000	-	31,000

¹ The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increase excludes increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.

² Lord Caine does not receive a salary for his work in the department.

³ Severance pay of £16,876 was due to Brandon Lewis on his departure in the financial year 2022-23.

⁴ Severance pay of £16,876 was due to Shailesh Vara on his departure in the financial year 2022-23.

Pension Benefits

Ministers	Accrued pension at age 65 as at 31/3/24	Real increase in pension at age 65	CETV at 31/3/24	CETV at 31/3/23	Real increase in CETV
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
The Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (from 6 th September 2022)	5-10	0-2.5	86	52	14
The Rt Hon Steve Baker MP, Minister of State for Northern Ireland Office (from 7 th September 2022)	0-5	0-2.5	24	11	6

Ministerial pensions

Pension benefits for ministers are provided by the Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund (PCPF). Pension scheme administration is provided by Buck Pensions UK who are retirement plans administrators. The scheme is made under statute and the rules are set out in the Ministers' etc. Pension Scheme 2015, available [here](https://mypcpfpension.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ministerial-pension-scheme-rules.pdf): <https://mypcpfpension.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ministerial-pension-scheme-rules.pdf>

Those ministers who are Members of Parliament may also accrue an MP's pension under the PCPF (details of which are not included in this report). A new MP's pension scheme was introduced from May 2015, although members who were aged 55 or older on 1st April 2013 have transitional protection to remain in the previous final salary pension scheme.

Benefits for ministers are payable from State Pension age under the 2015 scheme. Pensions are re-valued annually in line with Pensions Increase legislation both before and after retirement. The contribution rate from May 2015 is 11.1% and the accrual rate is 1.775% of pensionable earnings.

The figure shown for pension value includes the total pension payable to the member under both the pre- and post-2015 Ministerial pension schemes.

The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

This is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits they have accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the

benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total Ministerial service, not just their current appointment as a Minister. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

The real increase in the value of the CETV

This is the element of the increase in accrued pension funded by the Exchequer. It excludes increases due to inflation and contributions paid by the Minister. It is worked out using common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Senior Management's salary and pension entitlements

This section and the related tables have been subject to audit

Salary includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on accrued payments made by the Department and thus recorded in these accounts.

Salary figures include all allowances payable by the Department, whereas full year equivalents are calculated net of allowances, bonuses and ex-gratia payments.

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Permanent Secretary bonuses are determined by the Permanent Secretary Remuneration Committee within Cabinet Office.

The bonuses reported in 2023-24 relate to performance in 2022-23 and the comparative bonuses reported for 2022-23 relate to performance in 2021-22.

Benefits in Kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the department and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

The previous Permanent Secretary received living accommodation in Belfast provided at public expense and chargeable to tax under S163 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Travel costs to and from Belfast incurred by the previous Permanent Secretary and paid by the department are also considered a taxable benefit in kind.

Single total figure of remuneration										
Senior Managers ⁵	Salary (£'000)		Bonus Payments (£'000)		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)		Pension benefits (to nearest £1,000) ¹		Total (£'000)	
	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23
Permanent Secretary										
Dr Julie Harrison (from 6 September 2023)	85-90 (150-155 FYE)		-	-	-	-	33,000	-	115-120	-
Madeleine Alessandri (to 30 June 2023)	45-50 (165-170 FYE)	160-165	-	-	2,400	13,900	-	-	45-50	170-175
Director General										
Dominic Wilson ⁶	135 - 140	95-100 (125-130 FYE)	-	-	-	-	40,000	-	175-180	95-100
Directors										
Chris Flatt	100-105	95-100	0-5	10-15	-	-	40,000	14,000	145-150	120-125
William Gelling (from 6 July 2022)	100-105	65 -70 (95-100 FYE)	0-5	-	-	-	5,000	26,000	110-115	95-100
Dr Caroline Hacker (from 31 October 2022)	100-105	35-40 (95-100 FYE)	0-5	-	-	-	40,000	16,000	145-150	55-60
Holly Clark (from 15 January 2024) ⁷	20-25 (95-100 FYE)	20-25 (95-100 FYE)	-	-	-	-	22,000	2,000	40-45	25-30
Colin Perry (to 31 May 2023)	15-20 (100-105 FYE)	95-100	10-15	10-15	-	-	(5,000) ⁸	(41,000)	20-25	65-70
Mark Larmour (From 6 September 2011 to 31 May 2022)	-	15 -20 (FYE 95-100)	-	-	-	-	-	16,000	-	30-35
Nicholas Payne (from 14 February 2022 to 31 October 2022)	-	75-80 (125-130 FYE)	-	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	80-85
Tom Carney (From 12 July 2021 to 30 June 2022) ⁹	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tristan Pedelty (from 4 July 2022 to 30 November 23) ¹⁰	-	40-45 (100 -105 FYE)	-	-	-	-	-	9,000	-	50-55

⁵ Mike Keating ended as the Board Apprentice in August 2023 and did not receive a salary for his work in the department.

⁶ Dominic Wilson acted as Interim Accounting Officer in the intervening period following the departure of Madeleine Alessandri.

⁷ Holly Clark was Acting Director for the period 1 June 2022 – 31 August 2022.

⁸ Final salary member (classic/classic plus/premium) who has transitioned to alpha. The final salary pension of a person in employment is calculated by reference to their pay and length of service. The pension will increase from one year to the next by virtue of any pay rise during the year. Where there is no or a small pay rise, the increase in pension due to extra service may not be sufficient to offset the inflation increase – that is, in real terms, the pension value can reduce, hence the negative values

⁹ Tom Carney was paid by the Cabinet Office during his time in the Department.

¹⁰ Tristan Pedelty was not counted as a Senior Manager for the period 1 April 2023 – 30 November 2023, therefore his remuneration for this period has not been disclosed. In 2022-23 he was paid by Cabinet Office for the period 4th July to 31st October 2022.

Non-Executive Directors

The department has two non-executive directors, details of whom can be found in the Corporate Governance Report.

Remuneration	Salary (£000)		Total (£000)	
	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23
Les Philpott Lead Non-Executive Director	10-15	10-15	10-15	10-15
Fiona Ross (From 1 March 2023)	10-15	0-5 (10-15 FYE)	10-15	0-5
Louise Wilson (From 1 October 2020 to 30th November 2022)	-	5-10 (10-15 FYE)	-	5-10

Pension Benefits

Senior Managers	Accrued pension at pension age at 31/03/24 and related lump sum	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31/03/24	CETV at 31/03/23 ¹¹	Real increase in CETV ¹²	Employer contribution to partnership pension account
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	Nearest £100
Permanent Secretary						
Dr Julie Harrison (from 6 September 2023)	0-5	0-2.5	30	-	24	
Madeleine Alessandri (to 30 June 2023)	-	-	-	-	-	7,500
Director General						
Dominic Wilson	50-55 plus a lump sum of 140-145	2.5-5 plus a lump sum of 0	1210	912	23	
Directors						
Chris Flatt	30-35 plus a lump sum 75-80	0-2.5 plus a lump sum of 0	598	451	24	-
William Gelling (from 6 July 2022)	25-30 plus a lump sum 65-70	0-2.5 plus a lump sum of 0	530	411	-8	
Dr Caroline Hacker (from 31 October 2022)	10-15	0-2.5	138	79	25	
Holly Clark (from 15 January 2024)	30-35	0-2.5	519	327	16	
Colin Perry (to 31 May 2023)	50-55 plus lump sum 130-135	0 plus a lump sum of 0	1254	1,186	-7	-

¹¹The pension benefits of any members affected by the public service pensions remedy which were reported in 2022-23 on the basis of alpha membership for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 are reported in 2023-24 on the basis of PCSPS membership for the same period.

¹² Taking account of inflation, the CETV funded by the employer has decreased in real terms.

Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Before 1 April 2015, the only scheme was the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS), which is divided into a few different sections – **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus** provide benefits on a final salary basis, whilst **nuvos** provides benefits on a career average basis. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or **alpha**, which provides benefits on a career average basis. All newly appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined the new scheme.

The PCSPS and **alpha** are unfunded statutory schemes. Employees and employers make contributions (employee contributions range between 4.6% and 8.05%, depending on salary). The balance of the cost of benefits in payment is met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions in payment are increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase legislation. Instead of the defined benefit arrangements, employees may opt for a defined contribution pension with an employer contribution, the **partnership** pension account.

In **alpha**, pension builds up at a rate of 2.32% of pensionable earnings each year, and the total amount accrued is adjusted annually in line with a rate set by HM Treasury. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004. All members who switched to **alpha** from the PCSPS had their PCSPS benefits 'banked', with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave **alpha**.

The accrued pensions shown in this report are the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach normal pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over normal pension age. Normal pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus**, 65 for members of **nuvos**, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of **alpha**. The pension figures in this report show pension earned in PCSPS or **alpha** – as appropriate. Where a member has benefits in both the PCSPS and **alpha**, the figures show the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes but note that the constituent parts of that pension may be payable from different ages.

When the Government introduced new public service pension schemes in 2015, there were transitional arrangements which treated existing scheme members differently based on their age. Older members of the PCSPS remained in that scheme, rather than moving to **alpha**. In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional arrangements in the public service pension schemes unlawfully discriminated against younger members.

As a result, steps are being taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The public service pensions remedy is made up of two parts. The first part closed the PCSPS on 31 March 2022, with all active members becoming members of **alpha** from 1 April 2022. The second part removes the age discrimination for the remedy period, between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, by moving the membership of

eligible members during this period back into the PCSPS on 1 October 2023. This is known as “rollback”.

For members who are in scope of the public service pension remedy, the calculation of their benefits for the purpose of calculating their Cash Equivalent Transfer Value and their single total figure of remuneration, as of 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024, reflects the fact that membership between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 has been rolled back into the PCSPS. Although members will in due course get an option to decide whether that period should count towards PCSPS or **alpha** benefits, the figures show the rolled back position i.e., PCSPS benefits for that period.

The **partnership** pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Mastertrust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute but, where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer’s basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at: <http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk>

2015 Remedy (McCloud)

In 2015, the Government introduced reforms to public service pensions. These reforms saw most Civil Service workers being moved into a new pension scheme called ‘alpha’. As part of these reforms, some members were not moved into alpha and some were moved in at a later date, depending on their age. Because these members were treated differently based on their age, some Public Service workers raised concerns that this was discriminatory and took the Government to court.

In 2018, the Court of Appeal judged that the difference in treatment between those closer to retirement and everyone else, was unlawful age discrimination. As a result of this judgment, steps are being taken to address those 2015 reforms. This is where the name 2015 Remedy comes from. The members who stayed in their original schemes (also known as Legacy schemes) back in 2015 were moved across into the alpha scheme on 1 April 2022.

All members of Civil Service Pensions who continue in service from 1 April 2022 onwards, do so as members of alpha. Legacy pension schemes (classic, classic plus, premium and nuvos) were closed in relation to service after 31 March 2022. In scope members will be able to choose benefits from either alpha and or their Legacy scheme for the Remedy period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. This choice will be available to members at retirement after 1 October 2023. Any affected members who retired before 1 October 2023 will be remedied at a later date.

Further details can be found at: [2015 Remedy \(McCloud\) Timeline – What to expect and when - Civil Service Pension Scheme](#)

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Fair Pay Disclosures [Audited]

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

	2023-24	2022-23
Band of Highest Paid Director FYE Total Remuneration	£150,000 - £155,000	£170,000-£175,000
Percentage change in performance pay and bonuses for highest paid Director	0%	0%
Median total pay and benefits ratio	3.3	3.9
Median total pay and benefits	£45,908	£43,897
Percentage change in Director total pay and benefits	-13% ¹³	0.6%
Ratio between highest paid director and 25th Percentile	4.1	4.6
25th Percentile total pay and benefits	£37,238	£37,683
Ratio between highest paid director and 75th Percentile	2.6	3.0
75th Percentile total pay and benefits	£59,000	£56,971

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The median remuneration of the workforce was £45,908 (2022-23: £43,897). The salary component of the median was £45,908 (2022-23: £43,647). The decrease in median pay multiple is due to an increase in median remuneration of the workforce resulting from an average 5.3% pay rise received in year. The lower quartile remuneration (representing the 25th percentile of the linear distribution) was £37,238 (the salary component of this was £37,238) (2022-23: £37,683) and the upper quartile remuneration (representing the 75th percentile of the linear distribution) was £59,000 (the salary component of this was £59,000) (2022-23: £56,971).

In 2023-24, no (2022-23, nil) employee received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £22,940 to £155,000 (2022-23: £22,275 to £175,000) as set out in pages 56 - 57.

¹³ The percentage change in directors total pay and benefits is based on full year equivalents

For employees of the entity taken as a whole, the average percentage changes from the previous financial year of salary and allowances was -5% (2022-23: 12%) and the percentage change in performance pay and bonuses payable was -10% (2022-23: 48%).

Compensation for loss of office [Audited]

No compensation for loss of office was paid by the department during the financial year (2022-23: Nil).

Ministers [Audited]

No ministers left under severance terms and no compensation payments were made (2022-23: £33,752).

Staff Report

Departmental Group Staff costs (Audited)					2023-24	2022-23
	Total	Permanently employed and inward seconded staff	Others	Ministers	£000 Special Advisors	£000 Total
Wages and salaries	19,217	16,987	2,008	222	-	19,149
Social security costs	2,119	1,942	165	12	-	1,870
Other pension costs	4,536	4,312	224	-	-	4,077
Sub Total	25,872	23,241	2,397	234	-	25,096
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(420)	(420)	-	-	-	(438)
Total net costs	25,452	22,821	2,397	234	-	24,658

Special Advisers are temporary civil servants. In order to improve efficiency, the administration of staff costs for all Special Advisers across government was moved to the Cabinet Office in July 2019, with corresponding budget cover transfers. Therefore, special adviser costs are now reported in the Cabinet Office Annual Report and Accounts. Special Advisers remain employed by the respective departments of their appointing Minister.

Pensions [Audited]

From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member's state pension age (or 65 if higher). From that date all newly-appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined alpha. Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: three providing benefits on a final salary basis (classic, premium and classic plus) with a normal pension age of 60; and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (nuvos) with a normal pension age of 65.

These are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes in which the Northern Ireland Office is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities.

Full actuarial valuations of both the PCSPS and PCSPS (NI) were carried out as at 31 March 2020. Details of the PCSPS and CSOPS can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions). Details of the PCSPS (NI) are available in the PCSPS (NI) resource accounts.

For 2023-24, total employers' contributions of £4,415,856 (2022-23: £4,028,199) were payable at rates in the range 26.6% to 30.3% of pensionable pay for CSOPs and 28.7% to 34.2% per cent of pensionable pay for CSOPS (NI), based on salary bands. The schemes' actuaries review employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the costs of the benefits accruing during 2023-24 to be paid when the member retires and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £29,305 (2022-23: £47,581) were paid to one or more of a panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age related and ranged from 8% to 14.75% pensionable earnings. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable earnings.

In addition, employer contributions of £594 (2022-23: £1,461), 0.5% of pensionable earnings, were payable to CSOPS and to the CSOPS (NI) to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees.

Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the reporting date were £1,872. Contributions prepaid at that date were £nil.

No person (2022-23: Nil) retired early on ill-health grounds. The total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £nil (2022-23: £nil).

Staff Numbers [Audited]

The average number of full-time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows:

		Permanent	Inward			2023-24	2022-23
	Total	Staff	Secondments	Others	Ministers	Number Special Advisors	Number Total
NIO Core Department	163	153	5	-	3	2	199
NIO sponsored NDPBs*	90	37	41	12	-	-	52
Other NIO sponsored ALBs**	116	9	107	-	-	-	103
Total	369	199	153	12	3	2	354

* The increase in average staff in 2023-24 relates to ICRIR becoming a non departmental public body.

** These figures include staff employed in the Crown Solicitor's Office, by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland and other sponsored bodies.

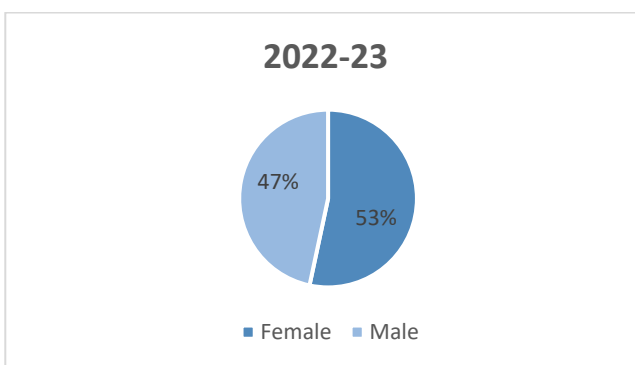
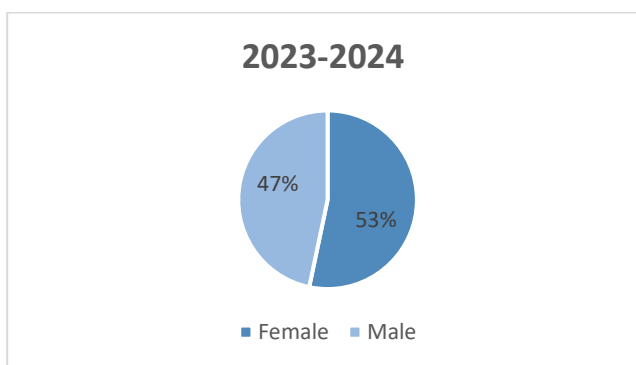
Staff turnover during 2023-24 (unaudited) was 9.2% (2022-23, 6.67%) (based on an average employee figure of 165 staff with 11 NIO staff having left the civil service during the year).

Staff Composition

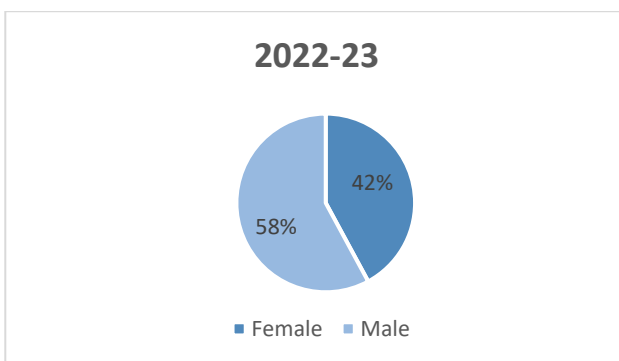
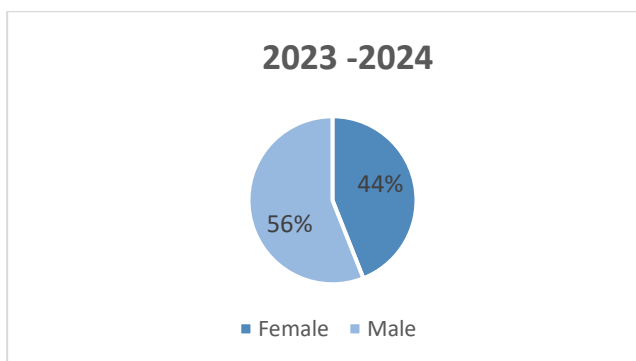
Senior Civil Service by Grade

	2023-24	2022-23
Permanent Secretary	1	1
Director General	1	1
Director	4	5
Deputy Director	12	12
Total	18	19

Staff Composition (Gender Analysis)



Senior Civil Service Staff Composition (Gender Analysis)



Sickness Absence

Throughout 2023-23, the department has continued to take a robust approach to managing attendance. There are a range of policies and procedures to support line managers to address this key area of their responsibilities. These policies are aimed at ensuring staff are afforded every opportunity of returning to the workplace as soon as possible. Data from the latest 12 month rolling period ending March 2024 shows that the Northern Ireland Office had an average working days lost figure of 3.1 (March 2023: 3.4).

Employment of People with Disabilities and Other Employee Matters

Employment training and advancement of disabled persons and other employee matters are reported on in the Directors' Report.

Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 (Statutory Instruments 328)

No official in the department spent time on trade union activities (unaudited). The Ministry of Justice as the HR and payroll provider provide trade union representation for staff.

Consultancy Expenditure

The department incurred £12.2k of consultancy expenditure in 2023-24 as part of a Board effectiveness review and dilapidations negotiations (2022-23:£444.3k).

Off-Payroll Arrangements (Unaudited)

Highly paid off-pay worker engagements as at 31 March 2024, earning £245 per day or greater.

Number (No.) of existing engagements as of March 2023	Core Department	ALBs	Departmental Group
Of which No. that existed:			
less than 1 year	5	-	5
for between 1 to 2 years	-	-	-
for between 2 to 3 years	-	-	-
for between 3 to 4 years	-	-	-
for 4 or more years	-	-	-

All highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2023, earning £245 per day or greater.

	Core Department	ALBs	Departmental Group
No. of temporary off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2023	6	-	6
Of which:			
Not subject to off-payroll legislation	-	-	-
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as in-scope of IR35	6	-	6
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as out-of-scope of IR35x	-	-	-
No. of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year	-	-	-
Of which: No. of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	-	-	-

Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages [Audited]

There were no civil service or other compensation schemes exit packages during the current or prior year.

Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRm) requires the Northern Ireland Office to prepare a Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) and supporting notes.

The SOPS and related notes are subject to audit, as detailed in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons. The SOPS is a key accountability statement that shows, in detail, how an entity has spent against their Supply Estimate. Supply is the monetary provision (for resource and capital purposes) and cash (drawn primarily from the Consolidated Fund), that Parliament gives statutory authority for entities to utilise.

The Estimate details supply and is voted on by Parliament at the start of the financial year. Should an entity exceed the limits set by their Supply Estimate, called control limits, their accounts will receive a qualified opinion. The format of the SOPS mirrors the Supply Estimates, published on gov.uk, to enable comparability between what Parliament approves and the final outturn. The SOPS contain a summary table, detailing performance against the control limits that Parliament have voted on, cash spent (budgets are compiled on an accruals basis and so outturn won't exactly tie to cash spent) and administration.

The supporting notes detail the following: Outturn by Estimate line, providing a more detailed breakdown (note 1); a reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure in the SOCNE, to tie the SOPS to the financial statements (note 2); a reconciliation of outturn to net cash requirement (note 3).

The SOPS and Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different to, IFRS. An understanding of the budgeting framework and an explanation of key terms is provided in the financial review section of the [Performance Report](#). Further information on the Public Spending Framework and the reasons why budgeting rules are different to IFRS can also be found in chapter 1 of the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, available on gov.uk.

The SOPS provides a detailed view of financial performance, in a form that is voted on and recognised by Parliament. The Financial Summary, provides a summarised discussion of outturn against estimate and functions as an introduction to the SOPS disclosures.

Summary of Resource and Capital Outturn 2023-24

Summary table, 2023-24, all Figures presented in £'000's

Type of Spend	Outturn			Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)		Prior Year Outturn
	Voted	Non-Voted	Total	Voted	Non-Voted	Total	Voted	Total	2022-23
Departmental Expenditure Limit									
Resource 1.1	38,192	-	38,192	43,021	45	43,066	4,829	4,874	39,649
Capital 1.2	2,625	-	2,625	10,157	-	10,157	7,532	7,532	413
Total	40,817	-	40,817	53,178	45	53,223	12,361	12,406	40,062
Annually Managed Expenditure									
Resource 1.1	(3,264)	-	(3,264)	2,001	-	2,001	5,265	5,265	378
Capital	-	-	-	1,172	-	1,172	1,172	1,172	-
Total	(3,264)	-	(3,264)	3,173		3,173	6,437	6,437	378
Total Budget Expenditure									
Resource 1.1	34,928	-	34,928	45,022	45	45,067	10,094	10,139	40,027
Capital	2,625	-	2,625	11,329	-	11,329	8,704	8,704	413
Total Budget Expenditure	37,553	-	37,553	56,351	45	56,396	18,798	18,843	40,440
Non-Budget Expenditure									
1.1/1.2	20,913,841	-	20,913,841	23,954,365	-	23,954,365	3,040,524	3,040,524	19,755,000
Total Budget and Non Budget	20,951,394	-	20,951,394	24,010,716	45	24,010,761	3,059,322	3,059,322	19,795,440

Figures in the areas outlined in thick line cover the voted control limits voted by Parliament. Refer to the Supply Estimates guidance manual, available on gov.uk, for detail on the control limits voted by Parliament.

Net Cash Requirement 2023-24

	SoPS Note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate: saving/(excess)	Prior Year Outturn total, 2022-23
Net Cash Requirement	3	21,239,686	24,317,708	3,078,022	19,790,404

Administration Costs 2023-24

	SoPS Note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate: saving/(excess)	Prior Year Outturn total, 2022-23 (restated)
Administration costs	1.1	21,990	22,331	341	23,162

Although not a separate voted limit, any breach of the administration budget will also result in an excess vote. Explanations for variations between estimate and outturn are set out in the financial review section of the [Performance Report](#).

Notes to the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply 2023-24

SOPS 1 Outturn detail by Estimate line

SOPS 1.1 Analysis of resource outturn (£000's)

Type of Spend (Resource)	Resource Outturn						Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total, 2022-23	
	Administration			Programme			Total	Total	Virements			Total Including Virements
	Gross	Income	Net	Gross	Income	Net						
Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL)												
Voted Expenditure:												
A - Northern Ireland Office	27,682	(5,692)	21,990	10,453	(243)	10,210	32,200	35,419	920	36,339	4,139	36,076
B - NIHRC	-	-	-	2,703	-	2,703	2,703	1,825	-	1,825	(878)	2,518
C - PCNI	-	-	-	740	-	740	740	771	-	771	31	722
D - IRC	-	-	-	335	-	335	335	382	-	382	47	333
E - ICRIR	-	-	-	2,214	-	2,214	2,214	4,624	(920)	3,704	1,490	-
Total voted DEL	27,682	(5,692)	21,990	16,445	(243)	16,202	38,192	43,021	-	43,021	4,829	39,649
Non-voted Expenditure:												
F - Funding of elections	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	-	45	45	-
Total non-voted DEL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	-	45	45	-
Total Spending DEL	27,682	(5,692)	21,990	16,445	(243)	16,202	38,192	43,066	-	43,066	4,874	39,649
Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)												
Voted												
G - Northern Ireland Office	-	-	-	(3,264)	-	(3,264)	(3,264)	2,001	-	2,001	5,265	378
Total voted AME	-	-	-	(3,264)	-	(3,264)	(3,264)	2,001	-	2,001	5,265	378
Non-budget												
I- Grant Payable to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund	-	-	-	20,899,000	-	20,899,000	20,899,000	23,954,365	-	23,954,365	3,055,365	19,755,000
Prior Period Adjustments	14,457	-	14,457	-	-	-	14,457	-	-	-	(14,457)	-
Total non-budget	14,457	-	14,457	20,899,000	-	20,899,000	20,913,457	23,954,365	-	23,954,365	3,040,908	19,755,000
Total Resource	42,139	(5,692)	36,447	20,912,181	(243)	20,911,938	20,948,385	23,999,432	-	23,999,432	3,051,047	19,795,027

SOPS 1.2 Analysis of net capital outturn by Estimate line (£000's)

	Outturn			Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate saving/ (excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total, 2022-23
	Gross	Income	Net	Net	Virements	Net total compared to Estimate, adjusted for virements		
Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL)								
<i>Voted Expenditure:</i>								
A - Northern Ireland Office	1,165	-	1,165	1,130	80	1,210	45	413
B – NIHRC	29	-	29	-	-	-	(29)	-
C – PCNI	92	-	92	85	-	85	(7)	-
D – IRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E – ICRIR	1,339	-	1,339	8,942	(80)	8,862	7,523	-
Total Voted DEL	2,625	-	2,625	10,157	-	10,157	7,532	413
<i>Non-voted Expenditure:</i>								
F - Funding of elections	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-voted DEL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)								
<i>Voted</i>								
H – ICRIR	-	-	-	1,172	-	1,172	1,172	-
Total voted AME	-	-	-	1,172	-	1,172	1,172	-
Prior Period Adjustment	384	-	384	-	-	-	(384)	-
Total non-budget	384	-	384	-	-	-	(384)	-
Total spending in DEL	3,009	-	3,009	11,329	-	11,329	8,320	413

The total Estimate columns include virements. Virements are the reallocation of provision in the Estimates that do not require parliamentary authority (because Parliament does not vote to that level of detail and delegates to HM Treasury). Further information on virements is provided in the Supply Estimates Manual, available on gov.uk. The outturn vs estimate column is based on the total including virements. The estimate total before virements have been made is included so that users can tie the estimate back to the Estimates laid before Parliament.

SOPS 2 Reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure

			2023-24 £'000 Outturn	2022-23 £'000 Outturn
		Note		
Total resource outturn in Statement of Outturn Parliamentary Supply				
	Budget	1.1	34,928	40,027
	Non-budget	1.1	20,913,457	19,755,000
			20,948,385	19,795,027
Capital provision NIHRC			-	-
Prior Period Adjustment		1.1	(14,457)	14,457
Net operating expenditure in Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure			20,933,928	19,809,484

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, IFRS. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource outturn to net operating expenditure, linking the SOPS to the financial statements.

SOPS 3 Reconciliation of Net Resource Outturn to Net Cash Requirement

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, not on a cash basis. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource and capital outturn to the net cash requirement.

		Estimate	Outturn	2023-24 Net total outturn Compared with Estimate: saving/(exc ess) £000
	Note	£000	£000	
Resource Outturn	SOPS 1.1	23,999,432	20,948,385	3,051,047
Capital Outturn	SOPS 1.2	11,329	3,009	8,320
<i>Adjustments for ALBs:</i>				
Remove voted resource and capital		(17,801)	(7,452)	(10,349)
Add Cash grant-in-aid		16,329	5,565	10,764
Accruals to cash adjustments:				
<i>Adjustment to remove non-cash items:</i>				
Depreciation/Amortisation	4	(4,286)	(3,926)	(360)
New Provisions and adjustments to previous provisions		(2,001)	(1,544)	(457)
Prior Period Adjustment			(14,841)	14,841
Other non-cash items			(1,230)	1,230
<i>Adjustments to reflect movements in working balances:</i>				
Increase/(decrease) in receivables	13		1,478	(1,478)
(Increase)/decrease in payables	14	1,374	307,927	(306,553)
Lease payments			1,667	(1,667)
Use of provisions	15	313,377	768	312,609
		24,317,753	21,239,806	3,077,947
Removal of non-voted budget items:				
Consolidated Fund Standing Services		(45)	(120)	75
Net cash requirement		24,317,708	21,239,686	3,078,022

SOPS 4.1 Analysis of income payable to the Consolidated Fund

In addition to income retained by the department, the following income is payable to the Consolidated Fund (cash receipts being shown in italics).

	Reference	2023-24 Outturn total £000		2022-23 Outturn total £000	
		Accruals	Cash	Accruals	Cash
Income outside the ambit of the Estimate [Excess] cash surrenderable to the Consolidated Fund		111	<i>111</i>	40	<i>40</i>
		-	-	-	-
Total amount payable to the Consolidated Fund		111	<i>111</i>	40	<i>40</i>

SOPS 4.2 Consolidated Fund Income

	2023-24 Outturn total £000	2022-23 Outturn total £000
Taxes and licence fees	-	-
Fines and penalties	-	-
Other income	111	40
Less:		
Costs of collection – where deductible	-	-
Uncollectible costs	-	-
Amounts Payable to the Consolidated Fund	<u>111</u>	<u>40</u>
Balance held at the start of the year	40	-
Payments into the Consolidated Fund	<u>111</u>	<u>40</u>
Balance held on trust at the end of the year	<u>151</u>	<u>40</u>

Parliamentary Accountability Disclosures [Audited]

Losses and Special Payments

There are no losses or special payments, individually or in aggregate in excess of £300,000, which would require separate disclosure during the year to 31 March 2024 (2022-23: nil), or that have been recognised since that date. All expenditure has been incurred in line with underlying Parliamentary authority.

Fees and Charges

An analysis of income from services provided to external and public sector customers is as follows:

	2023-24 £000			2022-23 £000		
	Income	Full Cost	Surplus/ (deficit)	Income	Full Cost	Surplus/ (deficit)
Crown Solicitor's Office	5,688	(5,636)	52	4,822	(5,169)	(347)
Total	5,688	(5,636)	52	4,822	(5,169)	(347)

In accordance with Managing Public Money, the department is required to disclose results for the areas of its activities where fees and charges are made. The foregoing analysis is not intended to meet the requirements of IFRS 8 Segmental Reporting. The Northern Ireland Office has complied with the cost allocation and charging requirements set out in HM Treasury and Office of Public Sector information guidance.

The Crown Solicitor's Office (CSO) generates income for legal work undertaken for all clients. The financial objective is to recover all costs associated with delivering these services. In FY 22/23 funding was received via the supplementary estimates process to cover this shortfall as described in the Spending Review. A schedule of fees is determined at the beginning of each financial year based on estimated costs and forecast activity levels.

Remote Contingent Liabilities

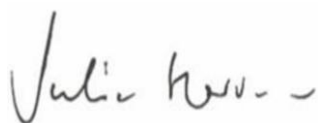
In addition to contingent liabilities disclosed in the financial statements, the department also reports liabilities for which the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is remote but are still in scope of IAS 37. There were no remote contingent liabilities in 2023-24 (2022-23: nil).

Notation of Gifts

There were no gifts made over the limits prescribed in Managing Public Money or Managing Public Money Northern Ireland in 2023-24 (2022-23: nil).

Public Sector Bodies outside the Departmental Boundary

There were no public sector bodies outside the boundary of the department where the NIO had lead policy responsibility in the year 2023-24 (2022-23: nil).



Dr Julie Harrison
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024

The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Office and of its Departmental Group for the year ended 31 March 2024 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. The Department comprises the core Department. The Departmental Group consists of the Department and the bodies designated for inclusion under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 (Estimates and Accounts) Order 2023.

The financial statements comprise the Department's and the Departmental Group's:

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2024;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the Group financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Department and the Departmental Group's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and its net operating expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and HM Treasury directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects:

- the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals for the year ended 31 March 2024 and shows that those totals have not been exceeded; and
- the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2022). My responsibilities under those standards are

further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I am independent of the Department and its Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Department and its Group's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Department or its Group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Department and its Group is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Department and its Group and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Reports.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Department and its Group or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for my audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Department and its Group from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; and
- assessing the Department and its Group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Department and its Group will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Department and its Group's accounting policies.
- inquired of management, the Department's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Department and its Group's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Department and its Group's controls relating to the Department's compliance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, the Northern Ireland (Loans) Act 1975, Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2023 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Department's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud,
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Department and its Group for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Department and Group's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Department and Group operate. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Department and its Group. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Northern Ireland (Loans) Act 1975, Managing Public Money, Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2023, employment law and tax legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Committee and in-house legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;

- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board; and internal audit reports; and
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain appropriate evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals and that those totals have not been exceeded. The voted Parliamentary control totals are Departmental Expenditure Limits (Resource and Capital), Annually Managed Expenditure (Resource and Capital), Non-Budget (Resource) and Net Cash Requirement.

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General

Date 12 December 2024

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Financial Statements

Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis. It also includes other comprehensive income and expenditure, which include changes to the values of non-current assets and other financial instruments that cannot yet be recognised as income or expenditure

		2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000 (restated)*	2022-23 £000 (restated)*
	Note	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Income	5	(136,101)	(136,101)	(104,765)	(104,765)
Total operating income		(136,101)	(136,101)	(104,765)	(104,765)
Staff costs	3	21,357	25,452	22,208	24,658
Other expenditure	4	21,042,646	21,044,535	19,888,503	19,889,539
Grant in aid to NDPBs		5,565	-	3,295	-
Total operating expenditure		21,069,568	21,069,987	19,914,006	19,914,197
Net operating expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024		20,933,467	20,933,886	19,809,241	19,809,432
Finance income		-	-	-	-
Finance expense		34	42	40	52
Net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024		20,933,501	20,933,928	19,809,281	19,809,484
Other comprehensive net expenditure					
Items that will not be reclassified to net operating expenditure:					
Net gain on:					
Revaluation of property, plant and equipment	6	(2,206)	(2,221)	(5,970)	(6,012)
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024		20,931,295	20,931,707	19,803,311	19,803,472

*The restatement of the 2022-23 balances is further explained in notes 1 and 23

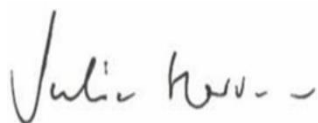
The above income and expenditure is derived from continuing operations.
The notes on pages 89-122 form part of these accounts.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2024

This statement presents the financial position of the departmental group. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity

	Note	31 March 2024		31 March 2023		31 March 2022	
		£000 Core Department	£000 Departmental Group	£000 (restated) Core Department	£000 (restated) Departmental Group	£000 (restated) Core Department	£000 (restated) Departmental Group
Non-current assets							
Property, plant and equipment	6	86,920	87,693	87,236	87,716	83,049	83,586
Right of use assets	7	1,781	3,296	2,036	2,581	-	-
Intangible assets	8	168	168	152	153	3	6
Financial assets	11	1,526,552	1,526,552	1,355,611	1,355,611	1,428,517	1,428,517
Total non-current assets		1,615,421	1,617,709	1,445,035	1,446,061	1,511,569	1,512,109
Current assets							
Trade and other receivables	13	4,870	5,231	3,392	3,462	5,520	5,604
Financial assets	11	122,524	122,524	272,906	272,906	134,819	134,819
Cash and cash equivalents	12	196,633	197,641	194,230	194,804	92,192	92,726
Total current assets		324,027	325,396	470,528	471,172	232,531	233,149
Total assets		1,939,448	1,943,105	1,915,563	1,917,233	1,744,100	1,745,258
Current Liabilities							
Trade and other payables	14	428,052	429,952	778,310	778,756	231,971	232,300
Lease liabilities	9/14	820	975	1,714	1,811	-	-
Provisions	15	1,254	1,254	1,614	1,614	99,353	99,353
Total current liabilities		430,126	432,181	781,638	782,181	331,324	331,653
Non-current assets plus/less net current assets/liabilities		1,509,322	1,510,924	1,133,925	1,135,052	1,412,776	1,413,605
Non-current liabilities							
Other payables	14	1,692,712	1,692,712	1,627,267	1,627,267	1,428,517	1,428,517
Lease liabilities	9/14	1,004	2,350	763	1,214	-	-
Provisions	15	5,356	5,431	4,221	4,296	469,457	469,532
Total non-current liabilities		1,699,072	1,700,493	1,632,251	1,632,777	1,897,974	1,898,049
Net liabilities		(189,750)	(189,569)	(498,326)	(497,725)	(485,198)	(484,444)
Taxpayers' deficit/equity							
General fund		(237,000)	(236,904)	(544,400)	(543,868)	(526,199)	(525,476)
Revaluation reserve		47,250	47,335	46,074	46,143	41,001	41,032
Total deficit		(189,750)	(189,569)	(498,326)	(497,725)	(485,198)	(484,444)

Dr Julie Harrison
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024



The notes on pages 89-122 form part of these accounts.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Statement of Cash Flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the departmental group during the reporting period. The statement shows how the department generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by way of income from the recipients of services provided by the department. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the departments' future public service delivery.

		2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000 <i>(restated)</i>	2022-23 £000 <i>(restated)</i>
		Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net expenditure		(20,933,501)	(20,933,928)	(19,809,281)	(19,809,484)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions	4/15	5,805	6,017	4,191	4,406
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	13	(1,478)	(1,767)	2,128	2,141
Increase/(Decrease) in trade payables	14	(454,729)	(452,671)	819,801	820,465
Less: <i>movements in payables relating to items not passing through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure</i>	14	148,632	147,662	(241,533)	(242,081)
Use of provisions	15	(768)	(768)	(563,353)	(563,353)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities		(21,236,039)	(21,235,455)	(19,788,047)	(19,787,906)
Cash flows from investing activities					
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	6	(1,760)	(1,800)	(770)	(770)
Purchase of intangible assets	8	(103)	(103)	(2)	(2)
Loans to other bodies	11	(150,000)	(150,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)
Repayment from other bodies - capital	11	129,441	129,441	134,819	134,819
Repayment from other bodies – interest		51,120	51,120	45,615	45,615
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities		28,698	28,658	(20,338)	(20,338)
Cash flows from financing activities					
From the Consolidated Fund (Supply) – current year		21,241,938	21,241,938	19,891,924	19,891,924
From the Consolidated Fund (non-supply)		-	-	-	-
Loans received from the National Loans Fund	11	150,000	150,000	200,000	200,000
Repayments of loans from the National Loans Fund – Capital	11	(129,441)	(129,441)	(134,819)	(134,819)
Repayments of loans from the National Loans Fund – Interest		(51,120)	(51,120)	(45,615)	(45,615)
Payment of lease liabilities		(1,667)	(1,785)	(1,107)	(1,220)
Finance charge	9	34	42	40	52
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing activities		21,209,744	21,209,634	19,910,423	19,910,318
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund		2,403	2,837	102,038	102,078
Payments of amounts due to the Consolidated Fund		-	-	-	-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period after adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund		2,403	2,837	102,038	102,078
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	12	194,230	194,804	92,192	92,726
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	12	196,633	197,641	194,230	194,804

The notes on pages 89-122 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Core Department)

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the department analysed into 'general fund reserves' (i.e. those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Consolidated Fund). The Revaluation Reserve reflects the change in asset values that have not been recognised as income or expenditure. The General Fund represents the total assets less liabilities of a department, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	Note	General Fund £000	Revaluation Reserve £000	Taxpayers' Equity £000
Balance at 31 March 2022 (restated)		(526,199)	41,001	(485,198)
Net Parliamentary Funding - drawn down		19,891,924	-	19,891,924
Net Parliamentary Funding - deemed		92,192	-	92,192
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	4	118	-	118
Unspent Supply payable to the Consolidated Fund	12	(194,190)	-	(194,190)
Excess receipts due to the Consolidated Fund	12	(40)	-	(40)
		19,790,004	-	19,790,004
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2022-23				
Transfers between reserves		897	(897)	-
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment		-	5,970	5,970
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets		-	-	-
Non-cash charges - auditor's remuneration		179	-	179
Net operating cost for the year		(19,809,281)	-	(19,809,281)
Total recognised income and expense for 2022-23		(19,808,205)	5,073	(19,803,132)
Balance at 31 March 2023 (restated)		(544,400)	46,074	(498,326)
Net Parliamentary Funding - drawn down		21,241,938	-	21,241,938
Net Parliamentary Funding - deemed		194,230	-	194,230
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	4	120	-	120
Unspent Supply payable to the Consolidated Fund	12	(196,482)	-	(196,482)
Excess receipts due to the Consolidated Fund	12	(151)	-	(151)
		21,239,655	-	21,239,655
Changes in taxpayers equity for 2023-24				
Transfers between reserves		1,030	(1,030)	-
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	6	-	2,206	2,206
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets		-	-	-
Non-cash charges - auditor's remuneration	4	216	-	216
Net operating cost for the year		(20,933,501)	-	(20,933,501)
Total recognised income and expense for 2023-24		(20,932,255)	1,176	(20,931,079)
Balance at 31 March 2024		(237,000)	47,250	(189,750)

The General Fund serves as the chief operating fund and is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in the Revaluation Reserve. The Revaluation Reserve records the unrealised gain or loss on revaluation of assets.

The notes on pages 89-122 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Departmental Group)

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the departmental group analysed into 'general fund reserves' (i.e. those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Consolidated Fund). The Revaluation Reserve reflects the change in asset values that have not been recognised as income or expenditure. The General Fund represents the total assets less liabilities of a department, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	Note	General Fund £000	Revaluation Reserve £000	Taxpayers' Equity £000
Balance at 31 March 2022 (restated)		(525,476)	41,032	(484,444)
Net Parliamentary Funding - drawn down		19,891,924	-	19,891,924
Net Parliamentary Funding - deemed		92,192	-	92,192
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	4	118	-	118
Unspent Supply payable to the Consolidated Fund	12	(194,190)	-	(194,190)
Excess receipts to the Consolidated Fund	12	(40)	-	(40)
		19,790,004	-	19,790,004
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2022-23				
Transfers between reserves		909	(910)	(1)
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment*		-	6,021	6,021
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets		-	-	-
Non-cash charges - auditor's remuneration		179	-	179
Net operating cost for the year		(19,809,484)	-	(19,809,484)
Total recognised income and expense for 2022-23		(19,808,396)	5,111	(19,803,285)
Balance at 31 March 2023 (restated)		(543,868)	46,143	(497,725)
Net Parliamentary Funding - drawn down		21,241,938	-	21,241,938
Net Parliamentary Funding - deemed		194,230	-	194,230
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	4	120	-	120
Unspent Supply payable to the Consolidated Fund	12	(196,482)	-	(196,482)
Excess receipts to the Consolidated Fund	12	(151)	-	(151)
		21,239,655	-	21,239,655
Changes in taxpayers equity for 2023-24				
Transfers between reserves		1,030	(1,030)	-
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	6	-	2,221	2,221
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets		(9)	1	(8)
Non-cash charges - auditor's remuneration	4	216	-	216
Net operating cost for the year		(20,933,928)	-	(20,933,928)
Total recognised income and expense for 2023-24		(20,932,691)	1,192	(20,931,499)
Balance at 31 March 2024		(236,904)	47,335	(189,569)

*the net loss on revaluation of property, plant and equipment includes £9k relating to an historic consolidation adjustment

Notes to the Departmental Accounts

Statement of Accounting Policies

1. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2023-24 *Government Financial Reporting Manual* (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Northern Ireland Office for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the department are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared pursuant to Section 6(4) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

The financial statements are stated in sterling, which is the department's functional and presentational currency. Unless otherwise noted, the amounts shown in these financial statements are in thousands of pounds sterling (£000).

The financial statements for 2023-24 have been prepared on a going concern basis. The department has Parliamentary approval for its 2024-25 budget and a 3-year Spending Review letter was received in December 2021 securing funding each year up to and including the 2024-25 financial year. Additional budget was secured for 2025-26 as part of the Spending Review announced at the Autumn Budget in October 2024. The department has a statutory basis for its function and related funding and there is no reason this would not continue.

Based on the above assessment the accounting officer has concluded that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis and does not consider there are any material uncertainties around the Core Department or the Departmental Group's going concern status for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The accounts comprise a consolidation of the core department and its four designated NDPBs; the Parades Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Independent Reporting Commission and the Independent Commission for Reconciliation &

Information Recovery, on a line by line basis. Counterparty transactions have been eliminated on consolidation in accordance with relevant accounting standards.

1.3 Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment comprise heritage assets, art and antiques, leasehold improvements, fixtures and fittings, vehicles, plant and machinery, computer equipment, office equipment, security equipment and assets under construction.

The department's heritage assets comprise Hillsborough Castle, its contents and its surrounding estate.

In addition, the department occupies a number of properties within the Northern Ireland Executive Estate and the Civil Estate in Great Britain for which rent is paid. Terms of occupancy of these buildings are outlined in agreements known as the Memoranda of Terms of Occupancy (MOTOs).

Consolidation of asset categories

The property, plant and equipment note requires the amalgamation of asset categories under the Plant and Machinery heading. The asset categories represented by this heading include:

- Plant and machinery
- Motor vehicles
- Furniture and fittings
- Office equipment
- Security equipment

1.3.1 Valuation of property, plant and equipment

Expenditure on property, plant and equipment of over £1,000 is capitalised. Within the core department the grouping of a range of property, plant and equipment has also been undertaken in respect of some personal computers, printers, office furniture and equipment.

Property, plant and equipment are stated at fair value, which is deemed to be the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

All non-heritage property, plant and equipment are restated to fair value each year by reference to indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Assets under construction are shown at cost, and relate to assets which are incomplete but for which the department has incurred a liability.

In compliance with IAS 16, subsequent expenditure on an asset which does not meet the criteria of enhancement or improvement is expensed through the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

Upward revaluations are credited to the revaluation reserve and permanent reductions in the value of property, plant and equipment are charged to the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Any subsequent revaluation of assets is credited to the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to the extent that it reverses previous revaluation decreases recognised as an expense in the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

1.4 Heritage assets

In accordance with the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) as issued by HM Treasury, heritage assets are capitalised and recognised in the Statement of Financial Position at the cost or value of the acquisition, where such a cost or valuation is reasonably obtainable. Hillsborough Castle is depreciated as set out in Note 1.6 and subject to quinquennial professional valuations with indices supplied by Land and Property Services used in the intervening years.

Hillsborough Castle is a facility used as a Royal residence and is considered as a specialised operational asset. The most recent professional full valuation of Hillsborough Castle has been carried out by Land and Property Services (LPS) – Department of Finance NI as at 31 March 2022, in line with standards published by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The most recent valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2024 using indices supplied by Land and Property Services. The basis of valuation is current value in existing use. Current Value has regard to the service potential that an asset provides in support of the entity's service delivery. The measurement approach used to arrive at the Current Value of 'in use' assets for specialised operation assets is Depreciated Replacement Cost as defined in RICS Guidance Note: Depreciated Replacement Cost Method of Valuation for Financial Reporting (effective January 2019).

Arts and antiques are not depreciated and are subject to quinquennial professional valuations. The last professional valuation was carried out on 31 March 2022 by Ross' Auctioneers and Valuers.

When heritage assets are revalued, the carrying amount is adjusted to the revalued amount and the accumulated depreciation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset.

1.5 Intangible assets

Expenditure on computer software licences lasting more than one year and costing more than £1,000 is capitalised and classified as intangible assets. Software licences are amortised

over the shorter of the term of the licence and the useful economic life. Software licences are revalued annually using indices provided by the ONS.

1.6 Depreciation/Amortisation

Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets, with the exception of land, are depreciated/amortised at rates calculated to write them down to estimated residual value on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives. Assets in the course of construction are depreciated from the point at which the asset is brought into use.

Estimated useful lives, which are reviewed regularly, are:

Asset category	Useful Life
Heritage assets	50 years
Art and Antiques	No Depreciation
Leasehold improvements	10 years (or the life of the lease, whichever is least)
Plant and machinery	3 - 25 years
Information Technology	2 - 16 years
Assets under construction	No depreciation
Intangible assets (software licences)	2 - 10 years

1.7 Realised Element of Depreciation from Revaluation Reserve

Depreciation and amortisation are charged to expenditure on the re-valued amount of property, plant and equipment and intangibles. An element of depreciation or amortisation therefore arises due to the increase in valuation and is in excess of the depreciation or amortisation that would be charged on the historical cost of assets.

On disposal of a previously revalued asset, the amount relating to this excess is a realised gain on disposal and is transferred from the Revaluation Reserve to the General Fund.

1.8 Employee Benefits

From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member's state pension age (or 65 if higher). From that date all newly-appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined alpha. Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: three providing benefits on a final salary basis (classic, premium and classic plus) with a normal pension age of 60; and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (nuvos) with a normal pension age of 65. These defined benefit schemes are unfunded. The department recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the schemes of the amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the pension schemes.

Further details regarding the above schemes are contained in the [Remuneration Report](#).

1.9 Early departure costs

The Department is required to meet the additional cost of benefits beyond the normal PCSPS, PCSPS (NI), Civil Service and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS) UK and CSOPS (NI) benefits in respect of employees who retire early, from the date of their retirement until they reach normal pensionable age. The department provides in full for this cost when the early retirement programme has been announced and this is binding on the department.

1.10 Financing and Operating income

Financing

The department is primarily resourced by funds approved by Parliament through the annual Supply process. Resources are drawn down each month to meet expenditure requirements.

Operating Income

Operating income is income which relates directly to the operating activities of the department. It principally comprises monies received in respect of EU grants and National Loans Fund interest.

Operating income also includes charges provided on a full-cost basis to external customers, as well as public repayment work, i.e. professional services provided by the CSO.

Revenue is recognised when performance obligations, as set out in client's contracts are met.

Revenue includes recoverable expenses but excludes value added tax.

Revenue is recognised at an amount that depicts the transaction price of the transfer of professional services to a customer. The majority of the revenue is derived from contracts where consideration is based on time and materials. For these contracts performance obligations are satisfied over time and revenue is recognised as services are provided as the pre-agreed rate, provided there is an enforceable right to payment for performance completed to date.

Invoices are issued in accordance with the terms of the engagement, usually monthly.

Operating income includes not only accruing resources but also income to the Consolidated Fund which in accordance with the FReM is treated as operating income. Operating income is stated net of VAT.

Operating income is split under the following headings depending on its classification:

- Administration income
- Programme income

It excludes funding from Parliamentary Vote, loans from the National Loans Fund and advances from the Contingencies Fund.

1.11 Administration and Programme expenditure

The classification of expenditure as administration or as programme follows the definitions set out in HM Treasury's *Consolidated Budgeting Guidance*. Broadly, administrative expenditure reflects the costs of running the department while programme costs relate directly to service delivery activities.

1.12 Grants payable and paid

The Core department recognises the grants due to its executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies, (the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Independent Reporting Commission, the Parades Commission and the Independent Commission for Reconciliation & Information Recovery), in the period in which they are paid.

The Core department processes receipts and payments on behalf of the Parades Commission and the Independent Reporting Commission. Grant-in-aid paid during the year is calculated by recording the details of payments processed and cash that has been paid out. NIHRC receive a cash grant-in-aid as NIO do not make payments on their behalf.

The department also makes a small number of grants to a variety of public sector, private sector and voluntary bodies and these are recognised in the period in which there is reasonable assurance that they will be paid and that the conditions attaching them will be complied with.

1.13 Leases

Government bodies typically lease properties used for administrative purposes for reasons of efficiency and flexibility. For other types of asset, the departmental group determines whether to lease or purchase based on value for money considerations, such as whether the underlying asset is required for its entire life or for a more limited period.

Although agreements between UK government bodies are not legally enforceable, any intra-UK government lease agreements are treated as if they constituted a legally enforceable contract, and therefore a lease liability and a corresponding right-of-use asset are recognised.

Leases are recognised in line with IFRS 16. The standard requires recognition of assets and liabilities for all leases in the Statement of Financial Position (SoFP), with exemption given to low value and short-term leases, i.e those with lease terms of less than 12 months. The standard results in the recognition of a right-of-use asset, representing a right to use the underlying leased asset and a lease liability, representing an obligation to make lease payments. The standard was adopted from 1 April 2022.

Measurement of right-of-use asset

The right-of-use asset and lease liability is recognised at the commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for initial direct costs, prepayments or incentives, and costs related to restoration at the end of the lease.

The right-of-use assets are subsequently measured at either fair value or current value in existing use in line with property, plant and equipment assets. The cost measurement model in IFRS16 is used as an appropriate proxy for current value in existing use or fair value for the majority of leases (consistent with the principles for subsequent measurement of property, plant and equipment) except for those which meet one of the following:

- A longer-term lease that has no provisions to update lease payments for market conditions or if there is a significant period of time between those updates; and;
- The fair value or current value in existing use of the underlying asset is likely to fluctuate significantly due to changes in market prices.
- The right-of-use assets are depreciated using the straight line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of the right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis of those of property, plant and equipment. IAS36 Impairment of Assets is used to determine whether the right-of-use asset is impaired and to account for any impairment loss identified.

Measurement of lease liability

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, or if that cannot be readily determined, the rate provided by HMT.

The lease payment is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. It is re-measured when there is a change in future lease payments arising from a change in the index or rate, if there is a change in estimate of the amount expected to be payable under residual value guarantee, or if there is a change in the assessment of whether an option to purchase, extend or terminate is exercised.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprises of the following:

- Fixed payments, including in-substance fixed payments;
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee;
- The exercise price under a purchase option when it is reasonably certain to be exercised, lease payments in an optional renewal period if it is reasonably certain an extension

option will be exercised, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless it is reasonably certain that the lease will not be terminated early.

When the lease liability is re-measured a corresponding adjustment is made to the right-of-use asset or recorded in the SoCNE if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is zero.

1.14 Provisions

The department provides for legal or constructive obligations which are of uncertain timing or amount at the reporting date on the basis of the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation. For any provisions extending beyond one year a nominal discount rate of 4.26% as quoted in *PES (2023) 10 Discount Rates for General Provisions, Post Employment Benefits, Financial Instruments and Leases (under IFRS 16): Announcement of Rates* has been used.

1.15 Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements in accordance with IAS 37 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*. Where the time value of money is material, contingent liabilities which are required to be disclosed under IAS 37 are stated at discounted amounts and the amount reported to Parliament separately noted.

Remote contingent liabilities outside the scope of IAS 37 but requiring Parliamentary reporting in accordance with the requirements of *Managing Public Money* are disclosed in the Parliamentary Accountability and Audit section of the Accountability Report.

1.16 Value Added Tax

Most of the activities of the department are outside the scope of VAT and, in general, output tax does not apply and input tax on purchases is not recoverable. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of non-current assets. Where output tax is charged or input VAT is recoverable, the amounts are stated net of VAT.

1.17 Notional charges

Notional charges, in respect of services received from other government bodies, are included to reflect the full economic cost of services.

1.18 Staff Costs

Under IAS19 *Employee Benefits*, all staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obligated to pay them. This includes the costs of any untaken leave as at the year end. The cost of untaken leave has been determined using data from staff leave records.

1.19 Financial Instruments

IFRS 9 requires an entity to recognise a financial asset or a financial liability in its Statement of Financial Position when it becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and financial liabilities which arise from the purchase and sale of non-financial items such as goods or services, which are entered into in accordance with the Northern Ireland Office's normal purchase, sale or usage requirement, are recognised when, and to the extent to which, performance occurs. All other financial assets and liabilities are recognised when the Northern Ireland Office becomes party to the contractual provisions to receive or make cash payments. Financial liabilities are derecognised when the contract that gives rise to it is settled, sold, cancelled or expires.

For any financial instrument extending beyond one year a nominal discount rate of 2.05% as quoted in *PES (2023) 10 Discount Rates for General Provisions, Post Employment Benefits, Financial Instruments and Leases (under IFRS 16): Announcement of Rates* has been used.

Financial Assets

Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables comprise trade receivables, other receivables and loans that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. Loans and receivables are initially recognised at fair value and are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method net of impairment. Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate. The effective interest rate is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating the interest revenue or expense over the relevant period using the estimated future cash flows.

IFRS 9 requires an entity to produce an expected loss impairment model for financial instruments held. Under the FReM, balances with core central government departments, the Government's Exchequer Funds (including the National Loans Funds) are excluded from recognising impairments.

The department's main financial instrument is loans from the National Loans Fund. There is no loss allowance for these loans as NLF loans can only be made where there is a reasonable expectation that they will be serviced and repaid on the due dates as the NLF is not legally allowed to make a loss.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and current balances with banks which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value and have an original maturity of three months or less.

Financial Liabilities

Trade and other payables

Financial liabilities within trade and other payables are recognised at fair value, which is usually the original invoiced amount.

Loans and other borrowings

Loans and other borrowings are initially recognised at fair value plus directly attributable transaction costs

1.20 Critical accounting estimates and key judgements

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of accounting estimates and assumptions. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the department's accounting policies. We continually evaluate our estimates, assumptions and judgements based on available information and experience. As the use of estimates is inherent in financial reporting, actual results could differ from these estimates. The estimates and assumptions which have the most significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts are discussed below.

(i) – Provisions

Provisions have been made for obligations which will be payable at a future date. These provisions are estimates and the actual costs and timing of future cash flows are dependent on future events. Any difference between expectations and the actual future liability will be accounted for in the period when such determination is made.

Dilapidations provisions are recognised reflecting the best estimate made by a third party supplier of the obligatory costs due to the lessor upon exiting the premises currently occupied under leasehold agreement by the department.

The NIO has recognised a remediation provision, the details of which are not given to avoid prejudicing the department in disclosing sensitive information.

This remediation provision reflects the best estimate made by management of the future costs, as required by IAS 37.

Litigation provisions are recognised reflecting the best estimate made by management and Counsel's legal advice of the future costs required to settle the obligation, as required by IAS 37.

(ii) – Foreign Exchange (FX)

In line with HMT Foreign Exchange guidance, the department uses spot transactions for FX matters. The department adheres to the requirement to use the Bank of England (BoE) for any transactions that are greater than £2m equivalent, which is the most cost-effective and gives access to competitive margins and prices for government bodies. As set out in the Guidance for the Management of Foreign Exchange Exposure (Guidance for the Management of Foreign Exchange Exposure - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)), the department will review this approach on an annual basis to evaluate if it remains the most appropriate strategy for managing FX risk.

(iii) – Work in Progress

The Crown Solicitor's Office accrues for the income relating to the cost of solicitor activity in relation to cases that have not completed at the reporting date. This is an estimate of the fees earned as a result of work undertaken up to the reporting date using an estimate of cost based on a combination of actual bills issued, solicitor time recording, average billing and an assessment of the progress on the case to date. Account has been taken of the estimated recoverability of the receivable in the calculation. Any differences between the amount charged to the client upon the completion of the case and the value recognised as work in progress will be accounted for in the accounting period when the client invoice is raised.

1.21 Third Party Assets

The Crown Solicitor's Office holds various funds on behalf of its clients. These relate to ongoing legal processes. These balances are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but are disclosed in Note 19 to these Accounts.

1.22 Prior period adjustment

In accordance with IAS 8 three material errors were identified in the 2022-23 financial statements. In line with the accounting standard the errors have been corrected and comparative amounts restated. Further details can be found in Note 23 to these Accounts.

1.23 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards adopted in the year ended 31 March 2024

The department has reviewed the standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards that became effective during 2023-24 and which are relevant to its operations. The Department has determined that there are no new standards relevant to its operations.

1.24 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards not yet effective

The following standards or interpretations have been issued by the International Accounting Standards Board but have not been adopted:

IFRS 17 – Insurance contracts replaces IFRS 4 and will be implemented in the FReM from 1 April 2025. The new standard combines current measurement of future cash flows with profit recognition over the period of contractual service provision, present insurance service results separately and elect whether to recognise insurance finance income and expenditure in profit and loss or other comprehensive income. Given that the department do not issue insurance policies, no material impact is expected on the financial statements as a result of this standard.

2. Statement of Operating Costs by Operating Segment

The department organises itself by group and reports income and expenditure by group to the Board each month. The current groups are:

- Security and Reconciliation (SAR)
- Strategy and External Affairs (SEA)
- Public Services & Economic Growth (PSEG)
- Corporate Operations Group (COG)
- Centrally Managed (CM)

Information on amounts paid to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund (NICF) is included as a separate operating segment below.

Information on income and expenditure for all ring-fenced funds and bodies (BDS) within the NIO departmental boundary are included as a separate operating segment below.

The Board received management information containing a summary of spend on a quarterly basis throughout the year. Information on a similar basis is reproduced in the table below.

The department does not consider that assets and liabilities can be meaningfully allocated to segments, and manages and reports on assets and liabilities in total. Therefore, no breakdown of assets and liabilities is given.

	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	2023-24 £000
	NICF	BDS	SAR	SEA	PSEG	COG	CM	Total
Gross expenditure	20,899,000	21,557	1,152	395	172	2,981	17,869	20,943,094
Receipts	-	(5,931)	-	-	-	-	(3)	(5,934)
Total net operating expenditure	20,899,000	15,626	1,152	395	172	2,981	17,866	20,937,192
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	2022-23 £000
	NICF	BDS	SAR	SEA	PSEG	COG	CM	(restated) Note 23 Total
Gross expenditure	19,755,000	22,795	1,109	387	239	2,517	17,830	19,799,887
Receipts	-	(5,144)	-	-	-	-	(94)	(5,238)
Total net operating expenditure	19,755,000	17,651	1,109	387	239	2,517	17,736	19,794,639

Note 2.1 Reconciliation between Operating Segments and Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000 <i>(restated)</i> Note 23
	Total	Total
Total net expenditure by operating segment	20,937,192	19,794,639
Reconciling items:		
AME and non-voted expenditure not included in analysis	(3,264)	14,845
Total net expenditure per statement of comprehensive net expenditure	<u>20,933,928</u>	<u>19,809,484</u>

3. Staff costs

More detail on staff numbers can be found in the Remuneration and Staff Report

Core staff costs	2023-24					2022-23
	Total*	Permanently employed and inward seconded staff	Others	Ministers	Special Advisors**	Total
	£000					£000
Wages and salaries	16,072	15,098	752	222	-	17,310
Social security costs	1,789	1,731	46	12	-	1,671
Other pension costs	3,916	3,916			-	3,665
Sub Total	21,777	20,745	798	234	-	22,646
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(420)	(420)			-	(438)
Total net costs	21,357	20,325	798	234	-	22,208

Departmental Group Staff costs	2023-24					2022-23
	Total	Permanently employed and inward seconded staff	Others	Ministers	Special Advisors	Total
	£000					£000
Wages and salaries	19,217	16,987	2,008	222	-	19,149
Social security costs	2,119	1,942	165	12	-	1,870
Other pension costs	4,536	4,312	224	-	-	4,077
Sub Total	25,872	23,241	2,397	234	-	25,096
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(420)	(420)	-	-	-	(438)
Total net costs	25,452	22,821	2,397	234	-	24,658

*Special Advisers are temporary civil servants. In order to improve efficiency, the administration of staff costs for all Special Advisers across government was moved to the Cabinet Office in July 2019, with corresponding budget cover transfers. Therefore, special adviser costs are now reported in the Cabinet Office Annual Report and Accounts. Special Advisers remain employed by the respective departments of their appointing Minister.

4. Other Expenditure

	Note	2023-24 £000		2022-23 £000 (restated)	
		Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Other Expenditure					
Communications, office supplies and services		1,501	1,586	1,299	1,365
Events and conferences		88	93	24	24
Legal costs		3,199	3,396	2,164	2,342
Maintenance and utilities		2,733	2,916	1,831	1,967
Professional fees		2,029	2,607	2,069	2,172
Audit Fees - ALBs		-	128	-	54
Other contracted out services		207	208	253	255
Subscriptions to professional bodies		250	253	331	331
Training costs		78	99	154	168
Travel, subsistence and hospitality		1,206	1,318	1,007	1,069
All other expenditure*		976	1,333	6,363	6,564
Non-cash items					
Depreciation	6/7	3,923	4,135	3,525	3,729
Amortisation	8	3	3	-	2
Loss on disposal		-	-	-	-
Exchange rate and other discounting	23**	(4,041)	(4,041)	14,467	14,467
Revaluation	8	(1)	(1)	(9)	(9)
Movement in Provisions in year	15	775	775	378	378
Auditor's remuneration and expenses		216	216	179	179
Rentals under Leases:					
Hire of plant and machinery		4	10	-	4
Expense on short-term and low-value leases		34	35	309	319
Consolidated Fund Standing Services:					
Election Funding		120	120	(186)	(186)
Consolidated Fund Standing Services		(120)	(120)	118	118
		13,180	15,069	34,276	35,312
Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund:					
Grant		20,899,000	20,899,000	19,755,000	19,755,000
National Loans Fund interest		51,120	51,120	45,615	45,615
EU grants***		79,346	79,346	53,612	53,612
		21,029,466	21,029,466	19,854,227	19,854,227
Total Expenditure		21,042,646	21,044,535	19,888,503	19,889,539

* 2022-23 Other expenditure included significant expenditure for 2022 Assembly Elections for printing and stationary c£861k and postage c£3.1m.

**the restated value in 2022-23 relates to a prior year adjustment outlined in note 23

***Includes a timing difference between pre year end receipt and post year end payment of c.£300k from 2022-23

During the year the department did not purchase any non-audit services from its auditor, the National Audit Office (2022-23: nil).

By statute the remuneration and associated employers' earnings-related National Insurance Contributions of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) are met directly from the Consolidated Fund, rather than Parliamentary Supply. These costs are included under Consolidated Funds Standing Services along with election running costs. As the cash for the CEO's salary does not pass through the department's accounts, the expenditure is accounted for as a non-cash item.

Pension benefits for the CEO are on a broadly by-analogy to the Civil Service and Others Pension Scheme (CSOPS) basis. This provides for benefits on a final salary basis accruing at 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service and an automatic lump sum of three times the pension. The actual payments come from the Consolidated Fund under section 14 (8) of the Electoral Law Act (NI) 1962.

5. Income

Operating income not within the budget (i.e. surrenderable to the Consolidated Fund) is analysed for resource budget purposes between that which is included in public expenditure and that which is not. In 2023-24, all operating income was within the budget (2022-23: all operating income was within the budget).

Note: Programme income relates to the following transactions with the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund:

- Interest receivable on loans made by the Northern Ireland Office to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund. The Northern Ireland Office uses this interest to pay interest due to the NLF in respect of the loans made to the Northern Ireland Office, equal to the amount of loan made from the Northern Ireland Office to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund.
- Income from the EU, which is received by the Northern Ireland Office to be paid over directly to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund.

Both amounts are offset by an equal and opposite expense as shown in note 4.

	2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000	2022-23 £000
	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Administration income:				
Professional Fees	5,688	5,688	4,822	4,822
Other administrative income	3	3	94	94
	5,691	5,691	4,916	4,916
Programme income:				
Other	243	243	322	322
National Loans Fund interest	51,120	51,120	45,615	45,615
Income from EU for NI programmes*	79,047	79,047	53,912	53,912
	130,410	130,410	99,849	99,849
Total	136,101	136,101	104,765	104,765

*Includes a timing difference between pre year end receipt and post year end payment of c.£300k

6. Property, plant and equipment – Departmental Group

	Heritage Assets £000	Antiques £000	Leasehold Improvements £000	Plant & Machinery £000	Information Technology £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total £000
Cost or valuation							
At 1 April 2023	85,065	1,767	2,530	707	3,421	-	93,490
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	354	1	192	-	547
Write off in year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Revaluations to SoCNE	-	-	(2)	-	5	-	3
Disposals	-	-	(2)	(205)	(560)	-	(767)
Revaluations	2,298	-	32	5	(9)	-	2,326
At 31 March 2024	87,363	1,767	2,912	508	3,049	-	95,599
Depreciation							
At 1 April 2023	1,759	-	1,367	439	2,209	-	5,774
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charged in year	1,759	-	299	207	526	-	2,791
Write off in year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Revaluation to SoCNE	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Disposals	-	-	(2)	(205)	(560)	-	(767)
Revaluation	102	-	3	3	(3)	-	105
At 31 March 2024	3,620	-	1,667	444	2,175	-	7,906
Carrying Amount							
At 31 March 2024	83,743	1,767	1,245	64	874	-	87,693
Carrying Amount							
At 31 March 2023	83,306	1,767	1,163	268	1,212	-	87,716
Of the total:							
Department	83,743	1,767	527	34	849	-	86,920
Other designated bodies	-	-	718	30	25	-	773
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024	83,743	1,767	1,245	64	874	-	87,693

Note 6 (cont.)

	Heritage Assets £000	Antiques £000	Leasehold Improvements £000	Plant & Machinery £000	Information Technology £000	Total £000
Cost or valuation						
1 April 2022	79,077	1,767	2,313	694	3,200	86,981
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	67	3	324	394
Write off in year	-	-	-	-	(168)	(168)
Net Revaluations to SoCNE	-	-	-	-	14	14
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(6)	(6)
Revaluation	6,058	-	150	10	57	6,275
At 31 March 2023	85,065	1,767	2,530	707	3,421	93,490
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2022	-	-	1,159	414	1,822	3,395
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charged in year	1,624	-	112	20	417	2,173
Net Revaluation to SoCNE	-	-	-	-	(56)	(56)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(6)	(6)
Revaluation	135	-	96	5	27	263
At 31 March 2023	1,759	-	1,367	439	2,209	5,774
Carrying Amount						
At 31 March 2023	83,306	1,767	1,163	268	1,212	87,716
Carrying Amount						
At 31 March 2022	79,007	1,767	1,154	280	1,378	83,586
Of the total:						
Department	83,306	1,767	739	219	1,205	87,236
Other designated bodies	-	-	424	49	7	480
Carrying amount at 31 March 2023	83,306	1,767	1,163	268	1,212	87,716

All of the assets above are fully owned, there are no finance arrangements in place. Heritage assets and antiques comprise Hillsborough Castle, its contents and its surrounding estate. Hillsborough Castle is a facility used as a Royal residence and is considered as a specialised operational asset. It has historical importance as the principal seat in Ireland of the Marquesses of Downshire for well over 200 years. The present building dates from the 1770s with 19th and 20th century additions. It passed into public ownership in the 1920s and was used, until direct rule, as the residence of the Governors of Northern Ireland. Currently, the Castle is the venue for official functions including supporting many Royal and other distinguished visitors. In 2014, the department entered into new arrangements with Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) to ensure that the Castle was opened up to the public and run on as efficient a basis as possible. For the period of the 25 year licence granted to HRP (from 20th March 2017), capital expenditure on the Castle is incurred by and treated as an asset of HRP not NIO, however, the underlying asset rests with NIO.

The most recent professional full valuation of Hillsborough Castle has been carried out by Land and Property Services (LPS) – Department of Finance NI as at 31 March 2022, in line with standards published by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the antiques are valued by John Ross and Company for the purposes of these accounts. Valuations are carried out every five years. The most recent valuation of Hillsborough Castle was carried out as at 31 March 2024 using indices supplied by Land and Property Services.

7. Right of Use Leased Assets

Following the adoption of IFRS16 in the 2022-23 financial accounts, leases are recognised on the statement of financial position as right of use assets. Note 1.13 provides further information.

2023-24		Leasehold Improvements £000	Plant & Machinery £000	Information Technology £000	Total £000
Right of use assets					
Cost or valuation	Note				
At 1 April 2023 as disclosed		3,749	52	8	3,809
Prior period adjustment	23	384	-	-	384
At 1 April 2023 restated		4,133	52	8	4,193
Additions*		2,059	-	-	2,059
Disposals		(2,177)	-	-	(2,177)
At 31 March 2024		<u>4,015</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4,076</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2023 as disclosed		1,556	5	6	1,567
Prior period adjustment	23	45	-	-	45
At 1 April 2023 restated		1,601	5	6	1,612
Charged in year		1,338	4	2	1,344
Disposals		(2,177)	-	-	(2,177)
At 31 March 2024		<u>762</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>779</u>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024		<u>3,253</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,296</u>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2023 (restated)		<u>2,532</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2,581</u>
Of the total:					
Core Department		1,738	43	-	1,781
Departmental Group		1,515	-	-	1,515
		<u>3,253</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,296</u>

*Additions relate to the two lease renewals and one new building lease entered into during the financial year.

8. Intangible assets – Departmental Group

The department's intangible assets comprise purchased software licences with a finite life.

	Software Licences	Software Licences
	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000
Cost or valuation		
Opening balance	314	182
Transfers	-	-
Additions	19	149
Disposals	(7)	(17)
Revaluation	(1)	-
Closing balance	325	314
Amortisation		
Opening balance	161	176
Transfers	-	-
Charged in year	3	2
Disposals	(7)	(17)
Revaluation	-	-
Closing balance	157	161
Carrying Amount at 31 March 2024 and 2023	168	153
Carrying Amount at 31 March 2023 and 2022	153	6
Of the total:		
Department	168	152
Other designated bodies	-	1
	168	153

Intangible assets are adjusted to their current value each year by reference to appropriate indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

9. Leases

Following the adoption of IFRS16 in the 2022-23 financial accounts, the department's leases are now recognised on the Statement of Financial Position, with the exception of leases which are less than 12 months or are considered low value (less than £1,000).

On initial application, the lease liability is measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments using the incremental borrowing rate at the date of initial application. The incremental borrowing rate is either:

- The interest rate implicit in the lease; or
- HM Treasury discount rate where interest rates implicit in the lease cannot be readily determined.

2023-24		Leasehold Improvements	Plant & machinery	Information technology	Total
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
Lease Liabilities					
At 1 April 2023 as disclosed		(2,660)	(33)	(3)	(2,696)
Prior Period Adjustment	23	(329)			(329)
At 1 April 2023 Restated		(2,989)	(33)	(3)	(3,025)
Additions*		(2,043)	-	-	(2,043)
Interest on lease liabilities		(41)	(1)	-	(42)
Cash Payment		1,766	16	3	1,785
At 31 March 2024		(3,307)	(18)	-	(3,325)
Of the total:					
Core Department		(1,807)	(18)	-	(1,825)
Departmental Group		(3,307)	(18)	-	(3,325)
Total future lease payments under leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods:					
No later than one year		(959)	(16)	-	(975)
Later than one year and not later than five years		(1,828)	(2)	-	(1,830)
Later than five years		(520)		-	(520)
Balance at 31 March 2024		(3,307)	(18)	-	(3,325)

*Additions relate to the two lease renewals and one new building lease entered into during the financial year.

10. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of the department are met through the Estimates process, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body of a similar size. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts for non-financial items in line with the department's expected purchase and usage requirements and the department is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

11. Investments and loans in other public sector bodies

Department of Finance & Personnel On-lent National Loans Fund Loans

	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000
Balance at 1 April	1,628,517	1,563,336
Additions	150,000	200,000
Repayments	(129,441)	(134,819)
Balance at 31 March	1,649,076	1,628,517

The balances represent the principal element of National Loans Fund advances on lent by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to the Northern Ireland Executive. Interest has as overall nil net impact on the Statement of Financial Position.

The balances above can be further analysed as:

	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000
Current assets	122,524	272,906
Non-current assets	1,526,552	1,355,611
Balance at 31 March	1,649,076	1,628,517

12. Cash and cash equivalents

	2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000	2022-23 £000
	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department (Restated)	Departmental Group (Restated)
Balance at 1 April	194,230	194,804	92,192	92,726
Net change in cash balance	2,403	2,837	102,038	102,078
Balance at 31 March	196,633	197,641	194,230	194,804
The following balances at 31 March are held at:				
Government Banking Service	196,000	196,000	193,302	193,302
Commercial banks and cash in hand	633	1,641	928	1,502
Balance at 31 March	196,633	197,641	194,230	194,804

13. Trade receivables, financial and other assets

	2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000	2022-23 £000
	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Amounts falling due within one year:				
VAT receivables	-	66	30	30
Trade receivables	3,613	3,613	2,517	2,517
Other receivables	75	112	62	64
Prepayments and accrued income*	1,182	1,440	783	851
Total	4,870	5,231	3,392	3,462

*£0.6 million of this balance represents work in progress not yet billed (2022-23, £0.4m).

14. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000 <i>(restated)</i>	2022-23 £000 <i>(restated)</i>
	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Amounts falling due within one year:				
VAT payables	15	15	-	-
Taxation and social security	667	708	597	631
Trade and other payables	223	256	121	192
Accruals and deferred income	107,990	109,457	310,209	310,550
Property, plant and equipment accruals	-	359	247	247
Current element of lease liabilities	820	975	1,714	1,811
Current element of repayment of National Loans Fund	122,524	122,524	272,906	272,906
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund but not spent at year end	196,482	196,482	194,190	194,190
Consolidated Fund extra receipts due to be paid to the Consolidated Fund	151	151	40	40
	428,872	430,927	780,024	780,567
Amounts falling due after more than one year:				
Leases	1,004	2,350	763	1,214
Accruals and deferred income	166,160	166,160	271,656	271,656
Repayment of National Loans Fund	1,526,552	1,526,552	1,355,611	1,355,611
Total	2,122,588	2,125,989	2,408,054	2,409,048

15. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	Remediation Work		Litigation Claims		Leasehold Dilapidation		Total	
	Core	Dept.	Core	Dept.	Core	Dept.	Core	Dept.
Balance at 1 April 2023	4,543	4,543	851	851	441	516	5,835	5,910
Provided in the year	3,594	3,594	497	497	-	-	4,091	4,091
Provisions not required written back	(1,987)	(1,987)	(561)	(561)	-	-	(2,548)	(2,548)
Provisions utilised in the year	(768)	(768)	-	-	-	-	(768)	(768)
Balance at 31 March 2024	5,382	5,382	787	787	441	516	6,610	6,685

Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows:

	2023-24 £000	2023-24 £000	2022-23 £000	2022-23 £000
	Core Department	Departmental Group	Core Department	Departmental Group
Not later than one year	1,254	1,254	1,614	1,614
Later than one year and not later than five years	3,380	3,380	3,902	3,902
Later than five years	1,976	2,051	319	394
Balance at 31 March 2024	6,610	6,685	5,835	5,910

	Remediation Work	Litigation Claims	Leasehold Dilapidations	Total 2023-24 £000
Not Later than one year	467	787	-	1,254
Later than one year and not later than five years	2,939	-	441	3,380
Later than five years	1,976	-	75	2,051
Balance at 31 March 2024	5,382	787	516	6,685

All provisions represent the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the date of approval of the financial statements.

16.1 Provision for Litigation Claims: £787k (2022-23: £851k)

The opening provision relates to a judicial review challenge which was allowed on the Boundary Commission of Northern Ireland's Final Recommendations Report relating to the configuration of Northern Ireland constituencies. This was settled during the 2021-22 year for £51k. The residual provision of £6k relates to potential stamp duty fees payable is no longer required following Counsel's legal advice.

In addition, £35k opening provision relates to a provision created in the 2021-22 financial year for a challenge to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) provisions within the Regional Rates and Energy (RRE) Act 2019. Following management's assessment the provision has been removed in the 2023-24 financial year.

Furthermore, £30k opening provision relates to two separate judicial review challenges of procedural fairness of decision. The challenges are subject to closed material proceedings. The provision for legal costs reflects the mid-point in the range of estimated costs, as required by IAS 37.

The remaining opening provision of £780k relates to a provision created in the 2022-23 financial year for defamation claim damages, the details of which are not given to avoid prejudicing the outcome of ongoing proceedings. The amount of the provision in the 2023-24 financial year has been reduced to £260k to reflect the Department's best estimate following Counsel's legal advice. Given that there is a range of possible outcomes management will continue to monitor these, as required by IAS 37.

A new provision has been created for £214k relating to a cohort of claims for delay damages the details of which are not given to avoid prejudicing the outcome of ongoing proceedings. The provision reflects the Department's best estimate following Counsel's legal advice.

In addition, new provision has been created for £100k relating to a civil damages claim which is subject to closed material proceedings and the details of which are not given to avoid prejudicing the outcome of ongoing proceedings. The provision for legal costs reflects the mid point in the range of estimated costs, as required by IAS 37.

The remaining new provisions created totalling £183k relate to various ongoing legal challenges. The provisions for legal costs and damages reflects the Department's best estimate following Counsel's legal advice or the mid-point in the range of estimated costs, as required by IAS 37.

16.2 Provision for Leasehold dilapidation: £516k (2022-23: £516k)

The opening provision reflects the estimated future costs to make good the premises occupied by the department upon exiting the relevant lease for four premises. The

dilapidations reports were commissioned during the 2020-21 financial year and a provision recognised. Following a further dilapidations report received during the year 2022-23 a reduction in the required provision was reflected in 2022-23 financial statements. There were no required changes to the provision in the 2023-24 financial year.

16.3 Provision for remediation work: £5,382k (2022-23: £4,543k)

The NIO recognised a remediation provision in the 2021-22 financial year, the details of which are not given to avoid prejudicing the department in disclosing sensitive information.

During the financial year 2023-24 further work was undertaken and the estimate of remediation work required was revised to reflect a greater understanding of future costs and outcomes. The remediation provision of £5,382k (2022-23: £4,543k) reflects the best estimate made by management of the future costs. Management will continue to monitor progress of outcomes and variables identified as required by IAS 37.

17. Contingent liabilities disclosed under IAS 37

Listed below are the department's contingent liabilities that have not been recognised as provisions because their existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events, not wholly within the department's control.

(a) Finucane Judicial Review

In November 2020, the Secretary of State announced his decision not to establish a public inquiry into the murder of the Belfast solicitor Patrick Finucane at that time. He committed to reassess whether a public inquiry was necessary to resolve any outstanding obligations under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights in light of the PSNI review process and the ongoing Police Ombudsman investigations into the case. In April 2021, Geraldine Finucane was granted leave at the High Court to seek a judicial review of the Secretary of State's decision. In December 2022, the High Court held that there had still not been an Article 2 compliant inquiry into the death of Patrick Finucane. In February 2023, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland appealed the High Court judgment. In July 2024, the Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the Secretary of State. In September 2024, the Secretary of State announced his decision to establish an independent inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005 into the murder of Patrick Finucane. There is a claim for delay damages, but it is not currently possible to effectively quantify the potential liability within a reasonable range.

(b) Internment and potential claims for compensation

As at 31 March 2024, there are Internment cases pending against the department or the Secretary of State which could result in damages against the department for false imprisonment of individuals who are claiming their detention was unlawful. At this point, it is not possible to effectively quantify the level of potential liability at this point within a reasonable range.

(c) Employment and personnel cases

There are a small number of cases pending against the department. It has not been possible to accurately estimate the value of these cases and there is continuing uncertainty over the expected date of settlement in respect of these cases at the reporting date.

(d) Gallagher Judicial Review

In October 2021, the Northern Ireland High Court held that it was potentially plausible that the 1998 Omagh bombing - the largest loss of life in a single incident in NI - could have been prevented by state authorities and directed that an Article 2 compliant investigation should be carried out. In February 2023, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced that an independent statutory inquiry into the Omagh bombing will be established. In June 2023, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced the appointment of Lord Alan Turnbull as the Inquiry Chairman. In February 2024, the Secretary of State announced the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. There are a cohort of claims for delay damages, but it is not currently possible to effectively quantify the potential liability within a reasonable range.

(e) Others

There are a substantial number of other cases pending against the department or the Secretary of State for which it is not possible to quantify any potential liability at this point. The cases largely relate to legacy and security matters and it is not possible to effectively quantify the level of potential liability at this point.

18. Related-party transactions

The Northern Ireland Office funds the Northern Irish government and is the parent department of four constitutionally separate entities. During the year the NIO has had a number of material transactions with these entities and with other entities which, for financial reporting purposes, are regarded as related parties. These include the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Northern Ireland Parades Commission, the Independent Reporting Commission and the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

In addition, the Northern Ireland Office has had a number of material transactions with other government bodies, including the Department of Finance (NI), and HM Treasury with regard to National Loans Fund.

No Board members, key managerial staff or other related parties have undertaken any other material transactions with the NIO during the year. The remuneration report sets out compensation paid to management.

19. Third-party assets

Funds are required in advance from clients to enable settlement of awards for damages and contributions toward the cost of court proceedings. The Crown Solicitor's Office places these funds on deposit until the final costs of a case have been calculated and settled. These are not departmental assets, as the funds are held on behalf of third parties and as a

consequence do not appear in these Accounts. As at 31 March 2024, these amounted in total to £1,465k (2022-23: £604k Restated).

20. Entities within the Departmental boundary

The entities within the boundary during 2023-24 were as follows:

Executive

Parades Commission for Northern Ireland *

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission *

Independent Reporting Commission*

Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery*

Non-executive / Advisory

Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland

Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland

Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland

Crown Solicitor for Northern Ireland

Sentence Review Commissioners

Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains

District Electoral Areas Commissioner (ad-hoc)

Independent Reviewer of Police and Military Powers under the Justice and Security Act 2007

Remission of Sentences Act Commissioners

Independent Chairman of the Northern Ireland Committee on Protection (non-statutory)

Veteran's Commissioner (non-statutory)

Independent Reviewer of National Security Arrangements in Northern Ireland (non-statutory)

*Separate Annual Accounts are produced by these entities and are available at:

<http://www.nihrc.org>

<https://www.ircommission.org>

<https://www.icrir.independent-inquiry.uk>

<http://www.paradescommission.org>

21. Returning Officers' Expenses (RoE)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has responsibility for electoral policy in Northern Ireland. As a result, the responsibility for setting the expenses of the Returning Officer for Northern Ireland rests with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The electoral administration system in Northern Ireland is administered centrally by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland who is an office holder independent of government. He is assisted by the staff of the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (the "EONI"), the administrative structure created to support his in the discharge of his duties.

The Chief Electoral Officer is both the electoral registration officer for all 18 constituencies in Northern Ireland and returning officer for all elections and referenda in Northern Ireland. The cost of running Parliamentary Elections is funded by the UK Consolidated Fund, as was

European elections. Funding for the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections is provided to the Northern Ireland Office by the Northern Ireland Executive through agreed funding mechanisms. The costs of local elections are funded by local authorities.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is accountable to Parliament for all expenditure by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The Northern Ireland Assembly elections were held on the 5th May 2022. The costs paid during the year relate to elections held in previous years or in the 2022-23 year as outlined below:

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	2023-24	2022-23
	£	£
2022 Assembly Election		
Expenditure – conduct of the poll	7,191	6,891,002
<i>Net Expenditure</i>	7,191	6,891,002
Net expenditure for the year ended 31 March	7,191	6,891,002

Election Expenses

	2022 Assembly Election £	Total 2023-24 £	Total 2022-23 £
Belfast East	396	396	407,728
Belfast North	370	370	388,341
Belfast South	350	350	392,665
Belfast West	325	325	343,012
East Antrim	367	367	328,668
East Londonderry	389	389	425,548
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	415	415	420,025
Foyle	400	400	368,005
Lagan Valley	397	397	386,512
Mid Ulster	389	389	367,108
Newry & Armagh	448	448	403,228
North Antrim	593	593	411,120
North Down	373	373	350,295
South Antrim	361	361	374,655
South Down	447	447	403,053
Strangford	354	354	335,288
Upper Bann	434	434	415,556
West Tyrone	383	383	380,467
SOFP Northern Ireland*	-	-	(12,610)
Unspecified	-	-	2,338
Total**	7,191	7,191	6,891,002

* 2022/23 immaterial negative expenditure relates to accruals reversals where estimates of expenditure were made in prior year and were immaterially higher than actual bill.

**2023/24 expenditure relates to reversal of VAT removed in error

22. Events after the reporting period date

In accordance with IAS 10, events after the reporting period are considered up to date at which the accounts are authorised for issue. This is interpreted as the date of the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

After the reporting period the department received notification of court judgement in relation to a matter previously treated as a Contingent Liability. As a result, the Department is liable for legal costs and damages, resulting in a present obligation and recognition of a current liability at the end of the reporting period for costs incurred up to 31 March 2024. In accordance with IAS 37 a provision has been created for costs incurred in the 2024/25 reporting period. Details of values are not disclosed to avoid prejudicing the outcome of ongoing legal discussions.

23. Prior Period Restatement

Three errors were identified in the 2022-23 financial statements:

1. An error was identified in respect of the use of the wrong discount rate per HMT guidance being used for the valuation of the Peace Plus Programme liability of £563,353,446. The department has corrected the discounting and this resulted in an increase to the liability of £14,467,474.
2. It was identified that included within Cash and Cash Equivalents the department has cash that met the definition of Third Party Assets under FREM and should have been disclosed as such. This resulted in Cash and Cash Equivalents being overstated by £604,313 at 31 March 2023 while Trade and Other receivables were understated by the same value. As a result the Cash Equivalent has also been corrected in the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The error was also identified in the 2021-22 financial statements meaning Cash and Cash Equivalent at the beginning of the period on the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows, the General Fund at 31 March 22 and the Net Parliamentary Funding – Deemed in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayer Equity were all incorrectly stated by £1,119,182.

3. A lease renewal was not capitalised in line with IFRS 16 due to the initial lease being excluded from the IFRS 16 transition review in 2021-22 as it was expiring in September 2022. The lease addition of £383,790, associated depreciation of £44,775, lease payments incorrectly charged to expenditure of £57,461 and lease interest of £2,461, were not accounted for.

A Prior Period Adjustment (PPA) has been completed to account for these errors. The effect of the restatement on each financial statement is as follows:

Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023 (extract):

Core Department	Adjustment		Restated
	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	£000	£000	£000
Other expenditure (net operating expenditure)	19,874,046	14,457	19,888,503
	<u>19,874,046</u>	<u>14,457</u>	<u>19,888,503</u>

Departmental group	Adjustment		Restated
	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	£000	£000	£000
Other expenditure (net operating expenditure)	19,875,082	14,457	19,889,539
	<u>19,875,082</u>	<u>14,457</u>	<u>19,889,539</u>

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 31 March 2023 (extract):

Core Department	Adjustment		Restated
	31 March 2023	31 March 2023	31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000
Non-Current Assets			
Right of use assets	1,697	339	2,036
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	2,788	604	3,392
Cash and cash equivalents	194,834	(604)	194,230
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	(774,853)	(3,457)	(778,310)
Lease Liability	(1,637)	(77)	(1,714)
Non-current Liabilities			
Other payables	(1,616,861)	(10,406)	(1,627,267)
Lease Liability	(511)	(252)	(763)
General fund	<u>(530,547)</u>	<u>(13,853)</u>	<u>(544,400)</u>
	<u>(2,725,090)</u>	<u>(27,706)</u>	<u>(2,752,796)</u>

Departmental group	Adjustment		Restated
	31 March 2023	31 March 2023	31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000
Non-Current Assets			
Right of use assets	2,242	339	2,581

Current Assets

Trade and other receivables	2,859	604	3,463
Cash and cash equivalents	195,408	(604)	194,804

Current Liabilities

Trade and other payables	(775,299)	(3,457)	(778,756)
Lease Liability	(1,734)	(77)	(1,811)

Non-current Liabilities

Other payables	(1,616,861)	(10,406)	(1,627,267)
Lease Liability	(962)	(252)	(1,214)

General fund

	(530,015)	(13,853)	(543,868)
	<u>(2,724,362)</u>	<u>(27,706)</u>	<u>(2,752,068)</u>

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2023 (extract):

Core Department	Adjustment		Restated
	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	£000	£000	£000
Cash Flows from operating activities:			
Net Operating expenditure	(19,794,824)	(14,457)	(19,809,281)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions	4,146	45	4,191
Increase in trade and other receivables	1,613	515	2,128
Increase in trade & Other payables	805,520	14,281	819,801
<i>Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure</i>	(241,719)	186	(241,533)
	<u>(19,225,264)</u>	<u>570</u>	<u>(19,224,694)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payment of lease liabilities	(1,050)	(57)	(1,107)
Finance charges	38	2	40
	<u>(1,012)</u>	<u>(55)</u>	<u>(1,067)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	93,311	(1,119)	92,192
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	194,834	(604)	194,230

Departmental Group

Departmental Group	Adjustment		Restated
	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	£000	£000	£000
Cash Flows from operating activities:			
Net Operating expenditure	(19,795,027)	(14,457)	(19,809,484)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions	4,361	45	4,406

Increase in trade and other receivables	1,626	515	2,141
Increase in trade & Other payables	806,184	14,281	820,465
<i>Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure</i>	(242,267)	186	(242,081)
	(19,225,123)	570	(19,224,553)

Cash flows from financing activities

Payment of lease liabilities	(1,163)	(57)	(1,220)
Finance charges	50	2	52
	(1,113)	(55)	(1,168)

Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	93,845	(1,119)	92,726
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	195,408	(604)	194,804

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 31 March 2022 (extract):

Core Department	31 March 2022 £000	Adjustment 31 March 2022 £000	Restated 31 March 2022 £000
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	4,401	1,119	5,520
Cash and cash equivalents	93,311	(1,119)	92,192
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	(233,090)	1,119	(231,971)
General fund	(527,318)	1,119	(526,199)
	(662,696)	2,238	(660,458)

Departmental group	31 March 2022 £000	Adjustment 31 March 2022 £000	Restated 31 March 2022 £000
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	4,485	1,119	5,604
Cash and cash equivalents	93,845	(1,119)	92,726
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	(233,419)	1,119	(232,300)
General fund	(526,595)	1,119	(525,476)
	(661,684)	2,238	(659,446)

24. Capital Commitments

One of the Department's reporting entities has committed to a lease agreement for a property that was occupied after the reporting period date. As at 31 March 2024 the lease had not commenced but there was a commitment to enter into a 10 year lease with an estimated value of £2m. This will be accounted for under IFRS 16 from the lease commencement date.

ANNEX I: REGULATORY REPORTING 2023-24 (Unaudited)

Spending by Northern Ireland Office & Northern Ireland Executive 2016-17 to 2024-25

	2016-17 Outturn £'000	2017-18 Outturn £'000	2018-19 Outturn £'000	2019-20 Outturn £'000	2020-21 Outturn £'000	2021-22 Outturn £'000	2022-23 Outturn £'000	2023-24 Plans £'000	2023-24 Outturn ⁽⁷⁾ £'000	2024-25 Plans £'000
<u>Northern Ireland Office Expenditure</u>										
Resource expenditure within Administration Costs	12,907	14,243	17,925	23,769	22,147	21,002	24,118	22,003	21,990	20,222
Other resource expenditure	11,524	10,720	6,444	16,850	6,568	14,105	16,571	19,446	16,202	35,542
Northern Ireland Office Resource ⁽²⁾	24,431	24,963	24,369	40,619	28,715	35,107	40,689	41,449	38,192	55,764
Northern Ireland Office Capital	445	1,496	451	825	852	1,594	413	3,305	2,625	2,055
Northern Ireland Office Resource + Capital DEL ⁽²⁾	24,876	26,459	24,820	41,444	29,567	36,701	41,102	44,754	40,817	57,819
<i>less depreciation & impairments</i>	-1,956	-1,872	-1,920	-2,100	-2,106	-2,193	-3,480	-3,786	(3,926)	(3,037)
Northern Ireland Office DEL ⁽³⁾	22,920	24,587	22,900	39,344	27,461	34,508	37,622	40,968	36,891	54,782
<u>Northern Ireland Executive Expenditure (The Northern Ireland Block) ⁽⁶⁾</u>										
Resource	10,475,282	10,624,949	11,006,279	11,944,961	15,525,442	14,438,455	14,321,579	15,995,107	15,507,389	15,922,990
Capital	1,005,419	1,147,995	1,297,127	1,346,216	1,716,054	1,820,544	1,896,296	2,138,124	2,108,807	1,960,765
Total Resource + Capital ⁽⁸⁾	11,480,701	11,772,944	12,303,406	13,291,177	17,241,496	16,258,999	16,217,875	18,133,231	17,616,196	17,883,755
<i>less depreciation & impairments</i>	-590,316	-546,594	-525,327	-584,321	-640,941	-319,149	-596,666	-1,147,991	-704,409	-996,602
Northern Ireland Executive DEL ^{(3) (5)}	10,890,385	11,226,350	11,778,079	12,706,856	16,600,555	15,939,850	15,621,209	16,985,240	16,911,787	16,887,153

(1) Totals may not sum due to roundings.

(2) Including depreciation & impairments

(3) Resource + capital - depreciation & impairments (includes Student Loans impairments).

(4) By convention Departmental Expenditure Limit budgets are expressed as resource and capital less depreciation & impairments. Therefore the resource and capital numbers in this table will not sum to the Departmental Expenditure Limit: the difference being depreciation & impairments.

(5) DEL figures for outturn years have been adjusted to reflect subsequent budgeting changes.

(6) From the 2015 Spending Review, Northern Ireland Office expenditure no longer forms part of the Northern Ireland Block.

(7) Northern Ireland Office outturn data represent final outturn and will accord with the accounts published elsewhere in this document. The Northern Ireland Executive data shows provisional outturn as the Northern Ireland Executive have yet to finalise their accounts.

Cash grant paid to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund 2022-23: Provision and Final outturn

	Original Provision £ million	Final Provision £ million	Outturn £ million
Departmental Expenditure Limit (Resource DEL + Capital DEL) (2) (4)	16,660.0	16,723.8	16,217.9
Annually Managed Expenditure (inc Other AME)	12,952.6	13,555.6	12,182.8
Expenditure Financed by Regional Rates	577.2	605.9	600.3
Expenditure Financed by RRI Borrowing	140.0	200.0	200.0
Total Managed Expenditure (DEL, AME & Other AME)	30,329.8	31,085.3	29,201.0
Less Non Cash charges	-5,177.0	-8,261.7	-6,253.2
Less Non Voted (DEL, AME & Other AME)	-4,508.9	-4,224.7	-5,070.0
NDPB Resource Consumption Excl Non cash	0.0	-9,849.4	-9,944.5
NDPB Cash Grant in Aid	0.0	10,764.6	10,454.2
Voted Other Expenditure outside DEL	0.0	593.7	545.3
Utilisation of Provisions	1,467.9	1,715.7	1,677.9
Movement in debtors/creditors	322.9	460.7	158.6
Supply Expenditure	22,434.7	22,284.3	20,769.3
Interest Payable to National Loans Fund	49.5	50.4	46.7
District Council Rates	706.9	715.4	715.4
Repayment of Principal of RRI Loans (financed by Regional Rates income)	117.7	115.6	115.6
Other Services	10.3	10.5	10.6
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
Loans Issued	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sums Repaid	0.0	0.0	40.4
Temporary Investments	0.0	0.0	1,799.0
Advances from the Consolidated fund	0.0	0.0	2.8
Total Expenditure	23,319.0	23,176.1	23,499.7
Income			
RRI Borrowing from National Loans Fund	140.0	200.0	200.0
District Rates	706.9	715.4	1,359.3
Regional Rates	694.9	605.9	
Interest Receivable in respect of loans made from NI Consolidated Fund	30.5	30.5	30.6
NICF Loan Repaid			49.0
Internal Departmental Funds			28.0
Temporary Investments			1,799.0
Advances from NI Consolidated Fund			2.8
Excess of Capital Receipts over capital issues			0.4
Miscellaneous receipts	113.4	277.0	275.6
<i>of which:</i>			
<i>NICF Balance</i>	1.0	1.0	0.0
<i>Continental Shelf</i>	1.7	1.5	1.5
<i>Misc - NIHE, Land Annuities etc</i>	6.7	8.3	8.5
<i>Excess Accruing Resources</i>	4.0	1.7	2.2
<i>CFERS</i>	100.0	264.3	263.5
<i>EU CFERS</i>	0.0	0.1	0.0
Total Income	1,685.6	1,828.9	3,744.7
Underspend of cash grant			1,592.2
Cash Grant payable to Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund by Northern Ireland Office	21,633.5	21,347.2	19,755.0

(1) Totals may not sum due to roundings

(2) Resource and capital DEL including depreciation

(3) Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 58

(4) Includes provision for expenditure implied by Fresh Start Agreement and New Decade New Approach

(5) All components of this calculation refer to expenditure incurred by/income received by the Northern Ireland Executive

Cash grant paid to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund 2023-24: Provision and Estimated outturn

	Original Provision £ million	Final Provision £ million	Estimated Outturn £ million
Departmental Expenditure Limit (Resource DEL + Capital DEL) (2) (4)	16,969.7	18,133.2	18,133.2
Annually Managed Expenditure (inc Other AME)	14,603.9	14,796.5	14,796.5
Expenditure Financed by Regional Rates	649.6	664.6	664.6
Expenditure Financed by RRI Borrowing	200.0	150.0	150.0
Total Managed Expenditure (DEL, AME & Other AME)	32,423.2	33,744.3	33,744.3
Less Non Cash charges	-8,136.3	-8,321.6	-8,321.6
Less Non Voted (DEL, AME & Other AME)	-5,470.0	-5,438.2	-5,438.2
NDPB Resource Consumption Excl Non cash	-9,851.2	-10,089.4	-10,089.4
NDPB Cash Grant in Aid	11,000.0	11,926.7	11,926.7
Voted Other Expenditure outside DEL	2.1	743.7	743.7
Utilisation of Provisions	1,693.6	1,911.7	1,911.7
Movement in debtors/creditors	1,712.0	517.6	517.6
Supply Expenditure	23,373.4	24,994.8	24,994.8
			0.0
Interest Payable to National Loans Fund	51.3	54.2	54.2
District Council Rates	765.2	775.2	775.2
Repayment of Principal of RRI Loans (financed by Regional Rates income)	117.1	115.9	115.9
Other Services (Statutory Salaries & Miscellaneous Receipts)	10.6	10.8	10.8
Total Expenditure	24,317.6	25,950.9	25,950.9
Income			
RRI Borrowing from National Loans Fund	200.0	150.0	150.0
District Rates	765.2	775.2	775.2
Regional Rates	766.7	780.5	780.5
Interest Receivable in respect of loans made from NI Consolidated Fund	28.4	28.8	28.8
Miscellaneous receipts	200.6	262.0	262.0
<i>of which:</i>			
	<i>NICF Balance</i>	0.6	0.6
	<i>Continental Shelf</i>	1.5	1.6
	<i>Misc - NIHE, Land Annuities</i>	8.5	21.7
	<i>Excess Accruing Resources</i>	0.0	0.0
	<i>CFERS</i>	190.0	238.2
	<i>EU CFERS</i>	0.0	0.0
Total Income	1,960.9	1,996.5	1,996.5
Underspend of cash grant			3,055.4
Cash Grant payable to Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund by Northern Ireland Office	22,356.7	23,954.4	20,899.0

(1) Totals may not sum due to roundings.

(2) Resource and capital DEL including depreciation.

(3) Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 58.

(4) Includes provision for expenditure implied by Fresh Start Agreement and New Decade New Approach.

(5) All components of this calculation refer to expenditure incurred by/income received by the Northern Ireland Executive.

(6) A detailed breakdown of the 2023-24 outturn for Northern Ireland Executive Expenditure is not yet available.

Calculation of Grant Payable to Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund 2024-25

	£ million
Departmental Expenditure Limit (Resource DEL + Capital DEL)	17,883.8
Annually Managed Expenditure (inc Other AME)	15,096.4
Self-Financed Annually Managed Expenditure	537.5
Expenditure Financed by Regional Rates	698.2
Expenditure Financed by RRI Borrowing	220.0
Total Managed Expenditure (DEL, AME & Other AME)	34,435.9
Less Non Cash charges	-8,120.8
Less Non Voted (DEL, AME & Other AME)	-5,854.0
NDPB Resource Consumption Excl Non cash	-10,835.5
NDPB Cash Grant in Aid	12,402.0
Voted Other Expenditure outside DEL	711.7
Utilisation of Provisions	1,773.6
Movement in debtors/creditors	497.3
Total Supply Expenditure	25,010.1
Interest Payable to National Loans Fund	55.2
District Council Rates	815.9
Repayment of Principal of RRI Loans (financed by Regional Rates income)	116.3
Other Services (Statutory Salaries & Miscellaneous Receipts)	11.2
Total Expenditure	26,008.7
Less Income	
RRI Borrowing from National Loans Fund	220.0
District Rates	815.9
Regional Rates	814.5
Interest Receivable in respect of loans made from NI Consolidated Fund	26.8
Miscellaneous receipts	198.2
<i>of which:</i>	
<i>NICF Balance</i>	0.2
<i>Continental Shelf</i>	1.6
<i>Misc - NIHE, Land Annuities etc</i>	7.4
<i>Excess Accruing Resources</i>	0.0
<i>CFERS</i>	189.0
<i>EU CFERS</i>	0.0
Total Income	2,075.4
Cash Grant payable to Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund by Northern Ireland Office	23,933.3

Notes

1. All items forming this calculation refer to expenditure incurred by/income received by the Northern Ireland Executive.
2. Totals may not sum due to roundings.

ANNEX II: ALB REPORTING 2023-24 (Unaudited)

	Total Operating Income £000	Total Operating Expenditure £000	Net Expenditure for the year (including financing) £000	Permanently Employed Staff		Other Staff	
				Number of Employees	Staff Costs £000	Number of Employees	Staff Costs £000
NIO Core incl. other NIO sponsored bodies	(136,101)	21,069,602	20,933,501	269	20,325	8	1,032
NIHRC	(11)	2,714	2,703	24	1,622	9	259
PCNI	-	740	740	6	506	6	13
IRC	-	335	335	3	211	3	55
ICRIR	-	2,214	2,214	7	157	32	1,272

E03126305
978-1-5286-5007-6